

La Comédiathèque

APOCALYPSE

JEAN-PIERRE MARTINEZ

A musical tragicomedy

comediatheque.net

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Apocalypse

A musical tragicomedy

Jean-Pierre Martinez

For several decades now, heatwaves have been occurring one after another, ever earlier, longer and more severe. Heat “records” are broken year after year. Humanity seems to be rushing towards its own destruction, unable to change course in order to avoid this looming apocalypse. This implacable mechanism is the very mechanism of tragedy: we already know that it will end badly, but we can do nothing to prevent it...

Jean-Pierre Martinez, both a playwright and a lyricist, has nevertheless chosen to sound the alarm, through sketches and songs. With seriousness, but not without humour, he warns us of the fragility of the human species, and of the absurdity of its fate should it disappear while possessing both the knowledge of the mortal danger that threatens it and the means to avert it. Unless the disappearance of Humanity is written into its DNA, and nothing can alter its programmed end...

Variable cast:

For one or more duos (up to 8), any gender.

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The songs may be performed live by the actors in the play or by singers, accompanied by musicians on stage, or sung over a recorded instrumental backing track, supplied by the author on request. The songs may also be played as part of a soundtrack integrated into the performance.

1 – The Fall of Icarus

Song The Fishbowl

2 – Climate sceptic

Song Apocalypse

3 – Catastrophe Theory

Song Surviving Mankind

4 – The Stone Age

Song Four Stars

5 – Revolt and Revolution

Song A Brief Moment of Eternity

6 – Apocalypse

Song Fragile, Handle with Care

7 – Soap bubbles

Song Crash Zone

8 – Hell

Song Soap Bubbles

1 – The Fall of Icarus

One character is blowing soap bubbles. Another arrives and watches. They are children, or adults dressed as children. Gender is irrelevant.

Two – That's funny.

One – It looks as if they're going to rise all the way up to the sky.

Two – Unless they burst first.

One – What could be drawing them up there?

A pause.

Two – Do you know Icarus?

One – Icarus? No... Is he a friend of yours?

Two – It's a myth the Greeks left us. Icarus is the son of Daedalus. To escape from the labyrinth where they have been imprisoned, they make wings out of wax and feathers. Intoxicated by the feeling of being able to fly like a bird, Icarus flies too close to the sun. The wax begins to melt, and he falls into the sea.

One – What a story...

Two – Obviously, it has a symbolic meaning.

One – Oh, really...?

Two – It's the notion of hubris. When Man tries to escape his condition and become a god, the gods grow angry with him and punish him for his pride.

One – I'd like to fly too. Like a soap bubble.

Two – Yes... but a soap bubble only lasts a few seconds.

One – Because the gods make it burst to stop it rising all the way up to the sky?

Two – Perhaps...

One – Then I'd like to be a butterfly.

Two – A butterfly only lives for a single day.

One – What about a bird?

Two – A raven can live for more than a hundred years.

One – I wouldn't really like to be a raven.

Two – Neither would I.

A pause.

One – It's hot.

Two – Yes.

One – It's summer.

Two – In summer, it's hot.

One – And in winter, it's cold.

Two – I prefer summer. I like it when it's hot.

One – So do I.

Two – In summer, you can be outside all day.

One – It stays light longer.

Two – And then summer means holidays.

One – I'd like it to be summer all year round, wouldn't you?

Two – Yes.

Song The Fishbowl

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/the-fishbowl

Blackout

2 – Climate sceptic

Lights up.

One character is there, the same as before or not, male or female. Another arrives.

Two – It's so hot today...

One – Oh no! Don't you start as well.

Two – What?

One – It's summer, it's hot. That's normal. No need to make a big deal out of it.

Two – Yes, but still...

One – They go on about it morning, noon and night on the news. It's hot. It's a heatwave. Red alert. Remember to stay hydrated. Don't leave your mother-in-law sitting in a car in full sun...

Two – Well yes, but... It really is hot, though.

One – It's hot, it's hot... No hotter than usual. I'm telling you, they take us for fools.

Two – Apparently today we broke more records again.

One – Records... What nonsense... It's not the Olympic Games, is it?

Two – True, heat records are about the only records we still manage to break in this bloody country.

One – I'm telling you, it's all rubbish. It's because of the greens!

Two – It's because of the greens that it's hot?

One – In any case, it's because of the greens that we have to hear about the heatwave all day long!

Two – It's true, they're a pain in the neck, those greens, but still...

One – If it's hot, it gives them grist to their mill, you see?

Two – To their mill?

One – To their wind turbines, if you prefer.

Two – Do wind turbines run on water?

One – Yes, well, I know what I mean...

Two – You're the only one who does...

One – I'm not going to draw you a picture. It's hot, vote for me! You'll be less hot.

Two – And so?

One – Do you really think that if we elected a Green president, it would be less hot in summer?

Two – I don't know... Maybe. We've never tried the greens.

One – It's hot, all right... You buy air conditioning, and that's that.

Two – Air conditioning... It's not cheap, you know. And it's not very green, is it?

One – Air conditioning isn't very green? I'd better leave, then. I might get angry.

Song Apocalypse

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/apocalypse

Blackout.

3 – Catastrophe Theory

Lights up.

One character is there, male or female. Another arrives.

Two – It's hot, isn't it?

One – Yes... Every year, it's a little hotter than the year before.

Two – And for a little longer.

One – At first, it was just a few days.

Two – A week at most.

One – We called it an episode.

Two – Yes. A heatwave episode.

One – Now it's no longer an episode, we get the whole season.

Two – And the seasons keep coming, with more and more episodes.

One – Like on Netflix.

Two – Now it's more than six months a year.

One – Soon we'll be talking about a cool spell from time to time.

Two – Like an ad break before the series continues.

One – How could we let this happen without reacting...?

Two – Because we've always put the short term before the long term.

One – Yes. The unemployment rate or the price of petrol before the survival of Humanity.

Two – Half a degree more every year doesn't sound like much.

One – But after ten years, that's five degrees.

Two – And after half a century, that's twenty-five degrees.

One – And twenty-five degrees is a lot.

Two – Far too much.

One – Can we still stop this infernal machine?

Two – Until now, all we've done is try to minimise the symptoms, without really tackling the causes of the disease.

One – And now it's too late.

Two – In any case, that's what we're told.

One – The people telling us that are sitting comfortably at home, by the swimming pool.

Two – Or indoors, with the air conditioning.

One – Their air conditioning, which dumps its heat outside. Where we are condemned to live, if only to go to work or do the shopping.

Two – We do have to fill the fridge.

One – It's crazy, when you think about it. All the crap they sell us, we keep nicely chilled in a refrigerator, while we are literally dying of heat in our rabbit hutches.

Two – At least when we're dead, they put us in a cold room.

One – Until it's time to incinerate us... Releasing even more carbon into the atmosphere.

Two – Yes, but what can we do about it?

One – Nothing.

Two – That's what mathematicians call catastrophe theory.

One – Catastrophe theory?

Two – How the very gradual, continuous evolution of a single parameter can suddenly, at a precise moment, produce a brutal break in continuity and an irreversible tipping point.

One – For example?

Two – A branch we're sitting on, slowly sawing through it, until it suddenly snaps, taking us down with it.

One – I see... That's what we call the straw that breaks the camel's back, isn't it?

Two – Exactly. It's like rising waters.

One – Or a boat that is sinking because there's a small hole in the hull.

Two – The water rises by one centimetre every hour. You can barely see it, and at the time it doesn't change anything.

One – But by the end of the week, the boat has sunk by more than a metre.

Two – We think it's not worth stopping the cruise for that, or putting the boat into dry dock to plug the hole. But at some point, the boat will suddenly go straight to the bottom, and nothing will be able to keep it afloat any more.

One – We know that after a month the boat will have sunk, but the captain doesn't dare put the crew out of work. And as long as the cruise is having fun...

Two – Catastrophe theory also applies to social phenomena. For centuries, the people accept tyranny without flinching, and then suddenly...

One – Enough is enough.

Two – And that's revolution.

A pause.

Two – The French managed to guillotine their king in order to have their revolution, but we are incapable of rebelling to stop this.

One – Who could we guillotine?

Two – I don't know... The King of Spain?

One – Do you think the King of Spain is responsible for global warming?

Two – No, but guillotining a king would make us feel a bit better, wouldn't it?

One – Yes...

Song Surviving Mankind

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/surviving-mankind

Blackout.

4 – The Stone Age

Lights up.

One character, male or female, is there. Another arrives.

One – We're suffocating. What's going on?

Two – The air conditioning has stopped working.

One – You couldn't get it going again?

Two – It hasn't broken down... but there's no electricity any more.

One – We've no water either.

Two – No internet.

One – How long are we going to last like this?

Two – Without internet?

One – Without water! And without air conditioning...

Two – What temperature is it now?

One – We're close to sixty degrees... It's insane!

Two – It's like the pay-as-you-go pension system. The old people thought global warming would be their grandchildren's problem.

One – The old people are dead, and their grandchildren are retired.

Two – And now it's the old people's problem too.

One – We were told so often that nothing could be done without increasing the deficit and unemployment. Now we've reached full employment and reduced the deficit...

Two – But we're all going to die...

One – This country used to be the most beautiful in the world. Now it's a desert.

Two – The planet's population has already fallen by half.

One – We thought the only people who would die would be those without air conditioning.

Two – So those who had air conditioning didn't care.

One – And now those who have air conditioning have no electricity to run it.

Two – Except those with a generator...

One – Until they run out of petrol to power it.

Two – Apparently the few dozen multi-billionaires who own ninety per cent of the world's wealth are building a spaceship to leave Earth.

One – To go where?

Two – I don't know... To another planet, I suppose... To start doing exactly the same thing all over again.

One – But we're condemned to die here.

Two – How could we let this happen...?

One – At first, forty degrees in summer in the north seemed unimaginable. Then it became the norm. We reached fifty. Forty degrees became the good old days. Today, we're over sixty.

Two – Air conditioning used to be a luxury. It became a matter of survival.

One – And now the air conditioning doesn't work any more.

Two – The time has come to pay for our blindness over the past fifty years.

One – Do you think we can still reverse the trend?

Two – We're told we can't. Unless we go back to the Stone Age...

One – Go back to the Stone Age. If this carries on, we won't even have that option any more...

Song Four Stars

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/four-stars

Blackout.

5 – Revolt and revolution

Lights up.

One character, male or female, is there. Another arrives.

One – What’s all that noise?

Two – A riot.

One – A riot?

Two – In the suburbs, people don’t have air conditioning. They’re dying of heat. Literally. So they’re heading to the capital. They’re occupying every place that has air conditioning. Offices, government departments, ministries... The police are trying to stop them getting in...

One – You can even hear gunshots...

Two – If anyone had told me that one day people would be fighting for a bit of cool air...

One – A bit of cool air... They’re fighting to survive, that’s all...

Two – And the government is doing nothing?

One – The president will address the nation this evening... from his air-conditioned office.

Two – What can he possibly tell us now? To close the shutters during the day? To remember to stay hydrated?

One – They knew. They did nothing all these years.

Two – And now they tell us nothing can be done any more. That it’s too late. That we have to adapt if we don’t want to disappear, like the dinosaurs.

One – We knew too. And we did nothing either.

Two – What could we have done?

One – We could have rebelled. In the past, we were capable of calling a general strike for wage rises. And yet we were never bloody capable of doing the same thing to avoid dying of heat, or being submerged by rising waters.

Two – Because it’s a global problem. People said to themselves: what’s the point of stopping pollution here, if the rest of the world keeps burning coal and oil? Just so they can flood us with cheap products.

One – True. We lacked solidarity. And now we’re all going to die. Together.

Two – We thought only human beings were mortal, not Humanity. And yet, on the scale of the universe, Humanity has existed only for a brief instant. How could we believe it would live for ever?

One – We make fun of the dinosaurs because they failed to adapt. But dinosaurs dominated the Earth for nearly 200 million years. Humanity as such has existed for only a few tens of thousands of years, and it is already on the brink of extinction.

Two – Besides, the dinosaurs succumbed to an external cause. A meteorite impact. They didn't have much time to adapt. Human beings are going to die from the consequences of their own behaviour, because they are incapable of changing it.

One – Like a smoker or an alcoholic who dies of cancer because he didn't have the willpower to stop drinking or smoking in time.

Two – It's as if the end of Humanity were already written into its own genes. Man is a time bomb.

One – And the countdown has begun...

A pause.

Two – Do you know where the expression "dog days" comes from?

One – No, but I have a feeling you're going to tell me...

Two – In Latin, *canicula* means “little dog” — or, more precisely, “little bitch”. It was the Roman nickname for Sirius, the brightest star in the sky, located in the constellation Canis Major, the Great Dog. In Antiquity, people believed that when Sirius rose at the same time as the Sun, its heat added to the Sun's and caused the hottest days of summer — the famous “dog days”.

One – So heatwaves are nothing new...

Two – No... And neither is global warming. By starting to make fire, prehistoric humans set off this deadly process, which accelerated with the Industrial Revolution.

One – What we need is a second Industrial Revolution, but in reverse. To stop this infernal machine...

Two – Do you think it could begin with this riot?

One – The question is whether it's a revolution, or just a revolt...

Song A Brief Moment of Eternity

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/a-brief-moment-of-eternity

Blackout.

6 – Apocalypse

Lights up.

One character, male or female, is there. Another arrives.

One – Did you hear the radio?

Two – The radio? Does that still exist?

One – Since the last television channel stopped broadcasting, they've reopened a radio station.

Two – And?

One – This time, I think it's the end.

Two – The end of the world, you mean?

One – The end of Humanity, at any rate.

Two – It's true that the Earth itself has seen worse. Ice ages, periods of overheating, meteorite impacts...

One – After a few centuries, the Earth will recover, that's for sure. But us...

Two – We wanted to fly too high. Too fast. We burnt our wings. And now we're in free fall. We're all going to crash.

One – That reminds me of something...

Two – And what are they saying on the radio?

One – They're telling us to pray.

Two – Pray?

One – The only radio station we can still listen to is one announcing that the apocalypse is coming tomorrow. And that we must prepare.

Two – Prepare? How?

One – By praying, precisely...

Two – If only all their prayers could have prevented this.

One – And yet, since Humanity has existed, there have been plenty of prayers.

Two – We would have been better off praying a little less and acting a little more.

One – After every natural disaster, earthquake, flood, forest fire... In the midst of mass graves, the survivors thanked God for having spared their own little selves.

Two – And even today, the few very temporary survivors of this apocalypse are still giving thanks to their God.

One – Do you think the very last survivor of Humanity, before disappearing, will still thank God for having spared him?

Two – What's certain is that God will disappear with the last man stupid enough to believe in him.

One – That's one of the few reasons to feel hopeful about the prospect of this apocalypse...

Song Fragile, Handle with Care

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/fragile-handle-with-care

Blackout.

7 – Soap Bubbles

Lights up.

One character, male or female, is blowing soap bubbles. Another arrives.

Two – What are you doing...?

One – Blowing soap bubbles.

Two (*taken aback*) – I can see that... But I mean...

One – Have you never blown soap bubbles?

Two – Yes... Probably... When I was five or six, I suppose...

One – Yes... Me too... I've decided to take it up again...

Two – Right...

One – Do you know what Nietzsche said about soap bubbles?

Two – Nietzsche?

One – “For me, butterflies, soap bubbles and human beings who resemble them are the ones who know the most about happiness.”

Two – Nietzsche said that?

One – In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

Two – Right...

One – You see... Nietzsche blew soap bubbles too.

Two – OK...

One – Why did you stop?

Two – Stop? Stop what?

One – Blowing soap bubbles. You said you used to do it when you were five or six. Why did you stop?

Two – I don't know... After a while, I moved on to other things, I suppose.

One – Other things... Like what, for instance?

Two – Later... I started smoking.

One – All right... But smoking...?

Two – Yes, joints too.

One – And after that...?

Two – After that... I stopped as well.

One – And now?

Two – Now I vape.

One – You should try taking up soap bubbles again.

Two – Yes, maybe... *(A pause)* Are you sure you're all right?

One – Yes, why?

The other looks around.

Two – It's been such a long time since I last came here.

One – Yes...

Two – And you?

One – Me?

Two – How long has it been?

One – I don't know... It must be... Actually, I'm not sure I've ever been here before, have I?

Two – No... No, me neither...

The other also looks around.

One – In any case, it hasn't changed at all.

Two – No...

Silence.

One – Then again...

Two – What?

One – How can we know it hasn't changed, if we've never been here before?

The other looks around again.

Two – There's nothing here. How do you expect it to have changed?

One – True... Nothingness doesn't change, does it?

Two – No.

A pause.

One – Do you know what Nietzsche said about nothingness?

Two – No... *(He expects the other to enlighten him, but the other says nothing.)* What did he say?

One – No idea...

Two – Then why are you asking me what Nietzsche said about nothingness?

One – Well... To find out... I thought perhaps you knew...

Two – What Nietzsche said about nothingness? You thought I knew that?

One – You're right, it's stupid. Besides, maybe he never said anything at all.

Two – About nothingness?

One – Yeah.

Two – Saying nothing about nothingness is probably the best thing to do, isn't it?

One – Yeah...

Two – You must be confusing him with Sartre.

One – Sartre said something about nothingness?

Two – I think so, yes... Didn't he?

One – Yes, maybe.

Two – But what...?

One – That...

Song Crash Zone

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/crash-zone-english-version

Blackout.

8 – Hell

Lights up.

One character, male or female, is there. Another arrives.

Two – You're still here...?

One – Where do you expect me to be?

Two – True, you're right...

A pause.

One – So we're being informal now?

Two – I don't know... Yes... Why not? Were we more formal before?

One – Before what?

Two – Before... Before we stopped being formal...

One – I don't know... I can't remember.

Two – Neither can I.

One – Would you rather we stayed formal?

Two – No, no... After all this time we've known each other...

One – Of course... (*A pause*) Actually, I can't remember... Where did we meet again?

Two – Here, I think.

One – Right...

Two – What?

One – Didn't we say we'd never been here before? That it was our first time?

Two – Yes...

One – How could we have met here, if we'd never been here before?

Two – Ah yes, you've got a point there.

One – Well, yes...

Two – It's strange. And yet your face did ring a bell.

One – Oh yes...? And what did my face say?

Two – I had the feeling I'd seen you somewhere before.

One – Then we must have met somewhere else.

Two – Yes... (*A pause*) Somewhere else...?

One – If we didn't meet here... or anywhere else, then we never met before, did we?

Two – Yes, that makes sense...

One – Which means that, in reality... we don't know each other?

Two – Yeah...

Silence.

One – So why are we on first-name terms?

Two – Maybe we knew each other... in another life.

One – What do you mean, another life? You only live once, don't you? Well, I don't know... That's what I've always been told...

Two – I do have an explanation, but I don't know whether you're going to like it.

One – At this point...

Two – If you only live once, if we've never met here or anywhere else, and yet we know each other... it means we're nowhere.

One – And above all, it means we're dead...

Two – I can't see any other explanation. Can you?

One – No, neither can I. (*A pause*) And... what would we have died of, then?

Two – What?

One – Yes, what. We must have died of something, mustn't we?

Two – So I tell you we're dead, and the first question that comes into your head is what we died of?

One – There's no need to be unpleasant... I'm starting to wonder whether we shouldn't go back to being formal after all.

Two – I don't know... There are lots of ways to die... but the result is the same, isn't it?

One – Yes, that's not wrong...

A pause.

Two – The question is whether we're in heaven or in hell.

One – We must be in hell.

Two – Why?

One – It's very hot, isn't it?

Two – Yeah, now I understand the expression "you'll burn in hell".

One – In heaven, they must have air conditioning. And besides... in heaven, shouldn't we be alone?

Two – Alone? You mean in solitary confinement?

One – True, in prison it's to punish difficult inmates that they put them in solitary.

Two – So why do you say that in heaven we should be alone?

One – Wasn't it Sartre who said: "Hell is other people"?

Two – Sartre? Yes, maybe...

One – If hell is other people, then in heaven you must be alone, right?

Two – That would be logical, anyway.

A pause.

One – We remember nothing. Why do I remember Sartre?

Two – And Nietzsche.

One – Do you remember anything?

Two – I don't know... I remember... that it was already hot.

One – Hot?

Two – Very hot.

One – But hot... like here?

Two – Yes, that's it... Like hell. But on Earth.

One – So that's how we died...?

Two – How?

One – Heatstroke. It happens.

Two – Yes... Maybe we'd gone hiking in the desert, without water, and died of thirst.

One – Or maybe we all died.

Two – All of us? The end of the world, you mean?

One – The end of Humanity, at any rate.

Two – Then why are there only two of us?

One – Maybe we were the last two.

Two – Maybe... Just as Adam and Eve were the first two.

One – What's certain is that here, it doesn't exactly look like the Garden of Eden.

Two – No... It looks more like...

One – Nothing.

Two – Yeah.

One – I remember too. It was very hot.

Two – Every year, it was a little hotter.

One – All the trees died.

Two – The Earth became a desert.

One – We had no water left.

Two – We ended up dying of thirst.

A pause.

One – But then... are we in hell, or are we still on Earth?

Two – What difference does it make?

One – You're right... What's the point of hell, when we managed to turn the Earth into a furnace?

A pause.

Two – It's strange, though...

One – What?

Two – Are you thirsty?

One – No.

Two – Neither am I.

One – It seems that when you're dead, you're no longer thirsty.

Two – There has to be some advantage to being dead. (*A pause*) We're no longer thirsty... but we're still just as hot.

One – Which goes to show you shouldn't always trust popular expressions.

Two – What expression?

One – To ice someone. Meaning to kill them.

Two – Yeah... All of Humanity has been iced. And yet we're still just as hot.

One – We are very little indeed.

Two – That reminds me of the story of the frog that wanted to be as big as the ox.

One – And swelled up so much that it burst.

Two – Or those financial bubbles people used to talk about on the stock market. Humanity was living in a bubble, and in the end it burst.

One – Which goes to show that philosophers talk a lot of rubbish too.

Two – Philosophers?

One – Nietzsche, about soap bubbles supposedly knowing more than anyone else about happiness.

Two – Yeah. All of Humanity was a soap bubble.

One – And in the end it burst.

Two – Pop... And there you are. Nothing left.

One – Until the next bubble.

Two – Which will burst in turn long before it reaches the stars.

One – Yes, we are soap bubbles.

Two – But who blows the bubbles...?

The first character starts blowing bubbles again, as at the beginning.

Song Soap Bubbles

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/soap-bubbles

Blackout.

End.

Song *The Fishbowl*

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/the-fishbowl

We think we know it all
Atoms, stars and black holes
Hell and purgatory
Our own human story
From the first crude tools of stone
To the age of crowns and thrones
We can travel to the Moon
Now we're heading off to Mars
Our exploits make the news
But the whole thing is a farce
We can forecast rain or shine
But we never have the time

We're going crazy in the fishbowl
Just goldfish in a glass of water
Our battles, wars, our conquest of the stars
It's all just a storm in a fishbowl
We're going crazy in the fishbowl
Going round and round in a crystal trap
Our prison is a glass of water
And if we break it, we'll pay the price

A goldfish isn't very bright
It hears no sound and has poor sight
And worst of all, it can't recall
That doesn't leave much hope at all
Beyond the glass, whatever we may see
We cannot test, we simply must believe
Sometimes through the murky glass
We glimpse a perfect shape go past
Could it be the hand that brings our food
The glassmaker who keeps us in this room?
Is he the one who put us in this mess
A god, a monster, a sorcerer's apprentice?

We're going crazy in the fishbowl
Just goldfish in a glass of water
Our battles, wars, our conquest of the stars
It's all just a storm in a fishbowl
We're going crazy in the fishbowl
Going round and round in a crystal trap
Our prison is a glass of water
And if we break it, we'll be high and dry

At least inside this prison made of glass
Let's not give thanks or praise to our jailer
Just because he lets us catch a glimpse
Of what we'll never see with our own eyes

We're going crazy in the fishbowl
Just goldfish in a glass of water
Our battles, wars, our conquest of the stars
It's all just a storm in a fishbowl
We're going crazy in the fishbowl
Going round and round in a crystal trap
Our prison is a glass of water
And if we break it, it's a long way down

I can't remember what I was saying
I've lost the thread, I don't recall
Goldfish, as everybody knows
Never write a single history book
Nor do amnesiacs write memoirs

Song Apocalypse

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/apocalypse

In the shade out on the terrace
Lounging by the pool
Or sitting nice and comfortable
With the air-con running cool
Sipping gin and tonic on the rocks
In their favourite designer polo
They smile and calmly tell you
Global warming? I don't think so
They're the climate sceptics

If they don't feel the heat
Then the thermometer must lie
Come on, it's only summer
Summer's hot. So why ask why?

It's hot, don't panic
We're the climate sceptics
It's hot, it's just the season
And we've always got a reason
It's hot, don't panic
Nothing catastrophic
Whatever the facts, whatever the weather
We know better
We know better

I think, therefore I am, oh, please
You don't need to think to have a view
In a democracy any fool can say
I don't think, I know it's true
Who are all these eco freaks
Saying that the world's an oven?
And now they claim the heat they feel
Is somehow caused by my SUV
Why make such a fuss about it?
Maybe they're just sick
When you're running a temperature
Just blame the thermometer for it

A fool is always a fool
You know the golden rule
Just because you know nothing
Doesn't mean you can't lecture us all

It's hot, don't panic
We're the climate sceptics
Champions of critical thinking
While everybody else is sinking
It's hot, don't panic
Nothing catastrophic
Whatever the facts, whatever the weather
We know better
We know better

Climate sceptic
You must be right
All those scientists
Just can't see the light
Troublemakers
Spoiling the fun
Paid manipulators
Maybe spies, every one
You've figured it all out
No degree required
An opinion will do
A conviction's even better
Facts just make you tired

Yesterday anti-vax
Today climate sceptic
Tomorrow MeToo denier
Always conspiracy-minded
Nothing is true
Unless you decide it
Whatever the facts, whatever the proof
Just call it fake
And deny the truth
We're the climate deniers

Meanwhile, out on construction sites
Workers sweat in fifty-degree heat
Then head back home to concrete blocks
With no cool air, no relief
While somewhere off the coast of Africa
People crowd onto boats and cross the sea
Funny thing about climate refugees
You don't meet many climate sceptics
Fleeing the heat

Song Surviving Mankind

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/surviving-mankind

There are no seasons anymore
That's what they used to say
They blamed it on the atom bomb
Turns out they had a point
We laughed it all away
Now the world has only one season
A nuclear winter
We burned the house we lived in
Then shouted, Fire! Fire!
We prayed to God for mercy
Then set the world on fire
The history of mankind
Is the history of fools
The arsonists were us
The firemen were too
Nothing new

Humanity abandoned Man
And Man turned Earth into a desert
But humanity won't leave the Earth
When there's nowhere left to run
You become the desert

Those who dreamed of seventh heaven
The climate-change deniers
The horsemen of Apocalypse
The eco-terrorists
Those who thought they'd build an ark
And somehow sail away
There is no other refuge
After us, the deluge

From manufactured arguments
To winning at all costs
From wars to armistices
From victories to losses
From global warming
To the melting Arctic ice
From ordinary oil spills
To black-gold tidal waves
At last, the final night.
We carefully arranged
Our own collective suicide
Then forged the prescription
For our own palliative care

Heaven's far too far away
To ever swim that far
And hell
We won't escape the shipwreck
Wherever we are
We're full of hot air
But we're not very bright
We take it nice and easy
As the world goes out of sight
We're far too down-to-earth
To ever leave the ground
The stars are much too distant
And some aren't even around
The journey takes forever
Unless we teleport
By the time we reach the stars
They may be dead before we get there

Those who dreamed of seventh heaven
The climate-change deniers
The horsemen of Apocalypse
The eco-terrorists
Those who thought they'd build an ark
And somehow sail away
There is no other refuge
After us, the deluge

If we could still save humanity
Would humanity be worth the saving?
It's not just about
Our carbon footprint
Humanity's an idiot
A bloody idiot
Should we forgive her
For what she's done?

Those who dreamed of seventh heaven
And those who never did
We're all aboard the same old ship
The ship goes down
So what is left?
A hole in the water
And a rainbow in the sky
No refuge
No subterfuge
After us The deluge

Song Four Stars

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/four-stars

So many stars up in the sky
So many sparks, so many eyes
Watching us without a glance
Dreaming us beyond the clouds
Holding mirrors to the heavens
Making us in their own image

We have scientists of our own
And politicians too
We have a president
Our academics too
Our wise men dressed in green
Our B-movies on the screen
We even went and dreamed up
Little men in green
Behind our telescopes
How could we ever know
If somewhere in the silence
Another mankind grows?

How arrogant must we be
To think we're all alone out here?
How innocent to invent a God
Then whisper prayers into his ear?
How twisted must we be
To turn the God that we invented
Into a tyrant here on Earth?

To professional prophets
And their military airs
I'll always choose instead
The music of the spheres
To the certainties of scholars
The dreams of solitary walkers
To questions with one answer only
Give me wonder, doubt and mystery

One small step for a man
One leap into the unknown
One word, one postscript
And the bargain's signed and done
They promised us the Moon
The dreams of Galileo
Flying carpets through the night

A thousand tales from long ago
The Earth is round
We'll have to make do
With the rings of Saturn
And after the Three Wise Men
Carpet bombs
Fall over Galilee

Loneliness among the crowd
That seems to be our fate
Civilisation everywhere
Humanity nowhere

Will we ever meet one day
Our fellow prisoners in space?
And why on Earth would they agree
To share this world with us?
We've given so much, after all,
To those we colonised
And what if all those little green men
Were not exactly
Over the Moon?

Give us today
Our dreams of tomorrow
Our heads among the stars
Our hands joined here below
Give us today
Our dreams of tomorrow
Our heads among the stars
And hand in hand below

The story's running backwards
And we are butterflies
Our time is running out
The season made for loving
Has barely just begun
And already
It's done

Song A Brief Moment of Eternity

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/a-brief-moment-of-eternity

Life is short
So is death
We haven't got the time to rest

The final sleep
Is not the last
Nor is it the first
It isn't eternal sleep
It's only a short nap
A brief moment of eternity
Before we wake again
Sudden awakenings
Endless awakenings
Until the end of time
Life doesn't last that long
Ninety springs — that's all
The first few years
We can't recall
The final years
We can't recall at all

We'd gladly have stayed on
For a few more decades
Just to watch
Our grandkids grow
Just to see how well
The world would carry on
Without us
Did we miss the best of it?
Did we escape the worst?

Eternal youth
We don't want to die
But if we live forever
Do we still have a future?
The end of the world? Who cares?
We won't be here to see it
After us, the flood
Only time will tell
But the dead will never know

A few short years of trying
To make something of our lives
To understand a little
Of what life is all about
And suddenly, it's over
We haven't done that much
And haven't understood a thing
When friends leave us
We mourn them
When civilizations die
We forget them
One step forward
One step back
Eternal life
Forever starting over

You never step into
The same river twice
Especially if you don't know how to swim
The current carries you away
It's not that life is much too short
It's just that we're much too slow
To keep swimming against the flow

Future perfect
Past decaying
Past imperfect
Future fading
Present
A brief moment of eternity

Song Fragile, Handle with care

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/fragile-handle-with-care

On every box and every crate
For a washing machine or fridge
On ships and trucks and railway cars
There's always something written big
Fragile, handle with care
As if those things were worth more than we
are

We wrap a work of art
Protect a sheet of glass
But looking in someone's eyes
Can we ever really tell
There's a soul about to crack
Or a heart that's been through hell?

Children cry when they're put to bed
When they fall down, when something hurts
Some children cry, and that's all right
Simply because they fear the night
Then children learn, and boys especially
Don't shed a tear, don't let it show
Keep what you're feeling down below

Handle with care!
Behind the strongest face you wear
There's a tender soul beneath the skin
And a fragile heart you hide within
Handle with care!
Don't hold back your tears
Crack the armour if you have to
Break the glass and sound the alarm

From the moment we are born
We're taught that showing our distress
Is nothing more than weakness
And leaves us open to attack
If you want peace, prepare for war
For thousands of years our armies
Have prepared for one war more
And all the peace we dreamed about
Has somehow passed us by

What if, for once, upon this Earth
We prepared for peace instead of war?
What if we simply dared to say
I'm frightened too
And tried to reassure each other
Would that be so hard to do?

Handle with care!
Behind the strongest face you wear
There's a tender soul beneath the skin
And a fragile heart you hide within
Handle with care!
Don't hold back your tears
Crack the armour if you have to
Break the glass and sound the alarm

Keep your childhood soul alive
Don't ever choose the force of arms
And if you ever let tears fall
Let them be tears of joy

Handle with care!
We ought to wear those words around our
necks
Without being taken for fools
Handle with care!
Tender hearts, don't stand aside
You are the future of humankind

Handle with care!
It was because mankind was fragile
That we learned to rule the world
And now the world beneath our hands
Has grown so very fragile
Our fragility is our strength
Our strength is our fragility

Song Crash Zone

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/crash-zone-english-version

Crash Zone

We came into this world

It wasn't Paradise Lost

Crash Zone

But it wasn't hell either

It wasn't the Garden of Eden

Or commandments carved in stone

It was the law of the jungle

May the best man win

Or the worst, it's all the same

The best man won

Man became king

Then burned the jungle down

Now only the law remains

We were all in the same boat

Now we're all aboard the same

Spaceship

The powder was all wet

The rocket crashed instead

Crash Zone. An SOS

A signal of distress

The end of the world?

The end of a world

We only have ourselves to blame

The law of the jungle

Isn't survival of the strong

It's survival of the clever

We play a game where losers win

Then count the bodies at the end

There was the Old World

Then there was the New World

The New World

Was the place where there was nothing

Before Europeans came

One thing about the New World

There wasn't much left there

After we had colonized it

We killed the native people

And if there were Martians

We'd probably kill them too

After converting them, of course

To Christianity

The New Frontier

Is hell from here

And soon we'll be landing

Crash Zone

We've counted the dead

Since humankind began

There are more dead

Than living people on the Earth

They've got the majority

Crash Zone. An SOS

A signal of distress

The end of the world

The end of our world

We only have ourselves to blame

Crash Zone, we've lost control

Crash Zone, we're going down

Crash Zone, we're gonna crash

Crash Zone

On the cradle of humanity

Song Soap Bubbles

https://soundcloud.com/jeanpierremartinez_music/soap-bubbles

Admire the bubbles as they fly
Not knowing where or how or why
The breeze will gently bear them on
With children's laughter like a song
They float straight up into the sky
Through dazzling sunlight, drifting high
So frail, mysterious, and bright
All dressed in rainbows made of light

We're soap bubbles that children blow
We're only bubbles, this we know
The gentle breeze that bears us on
Becomes the wind, and we are gone
For just a while, away we'll fly
Beside the passing butterflies
One breath is all that brings us here
One breath, and then we disappear

They swell and swell to such a size
Then burst, and no one can say why
And melt away to nothingness
One moment is all they possess
They fade into the clouds on high
Leaving no trace across the sky
Except one weightless drop of dew
A tear that almost smiles at you

We're soap bubbles that children blow
We're only bubbles, this we know
The gentle breeze that bears us on
Becomes the wind, and we are gone
For just a while, away we'll fly
Beside the passing butterflies
One breath is all that brings us here
One breath, and then we disappear

One day, dear child, when you have grown
Remember bubbles you once blew
Then in the shower, on your own
Make some more, as children do
Then let those bubbles float away
Out past your balcony to play
And on a gentle breeze take flight
To kiss the summer sky so bright

We're soap bubbles that children blow
We're only bubbles, this we know
The gentle breeze that bears us on
Becomes the wind, and we are gone
For just a while, away we'll fly
Beside the passing butterflies
One breath is all that brings us here
One breath, and then we disappear

About the author

Born in 1955 in Auvers-sur-Oise (France), Jean-Pierre Martinez was first a drummer for several rock bands before becoming a semiologist in advertising. He then began a career writing television scripts before turning to theatre and writing plays. He has written close to a hundred scripts for television and as many plays, some of which have already become classics (*Friday the 13th*, *Strip Poker*). He is one of the most produced contemporary playwrights in France and in other francophone countries. Several of his plays are also available in Spanish and English, and are regularly produced in the United States and Latin America.

Amateur and professional theatre groups looking for plays to perform can download Jean-Pierre Martinez's plays for free from his websites :

<https://jeanpierremartinez.net/>

<https://comediatheque.net/>

However, performance rights, which constitute fair compensation for the author's work, are a legal obligation. Whether you are an amateur or a professional, you must request authorization to perform the play and pay the corresponding royalties for the production.

Jean-Pierre Martinez is represented by the French Society of Authors (SACD).

To get in touch with Jean-Pierre Martinez and request authorization to perform one of his works, please use the [contact form on his websites](#).

Jean-Pierre Martinez recently returned to music, writing original songs inspired by his poems and plays.

With **Jean-Pierre Martinez Music**, he extends that creative universe through original songs: short stories in musical form, humorous or melancholy, in which each song sometimes becomes a miniature theatrical scene.

<https://jeanpierremartinezmusic.com/>

Other plays by the same author translated in English

Comedies for 2

A Thwarted Vocation
EuroStar
Heads and Tails
Him and Her
Is there a pilot in the audience?
Last chance encounter
New Year's Eve at the Morgue
Not even dead
Pentimento
Preliminaries
Running on empty
The Costa Mucho Castaways
The Joker
The Rope
The Window across the courtyard

Comedies for 3

A brief moment of eternity
A simple business dinner
An innocent little murder
Cheaters
Crash Zone
Fragile, Handle with care
Friday the 13th
Horizons
Ménage à trois
One small step for a woman,
one giant leap backward for
Mankind
The Way of Chance

Comedies for 4

A Cuckoo's nest
A hell of a night
A Skeleton in the Closet
Back to stage
Bed and Breakfast
Casket for two
Crisis and Punishment
Déjà vu
Family Portrait
Family Tree
Four stars
Friday the 13th
Gay friendly
How to get rid of your best
friends
Is there a critic in the audience?
Is there an author in the
audience?
Just a moment before the end
of the world
Lovestruck at Swindlemore
Hall
One marriage out of two
Perfect In-laws
Quarantine
Requiem for a Stradivarius
Strip Poker
Surviving Mankind
The Deal
The Fishbowl
The Perfect Son-in-Law
The Pyramids
The Smell of Money
The Tourists

Comedies for 5 to 6

All's well that starts badly
Christmas Eve at the Police
Station
Crisis and Punishment
Critical but Stable
In lieu of flowers...
King of Fools
Traffic Jam on Graveyard Lane

Comedies for 7 or more

At the bar counter
Backstage Comedy
Blue Flamingos
Check to the Kings
Christmas Eve at the Police
Station
False exit
In flagrante delirium
Just like a Christmas movie
Miracle at Saint Mary Juana
Abbey
Music does not always soothe
the savage beasts
Neighbours'Day
Nicotine
Of Vegetables and Books
Offside
Open Hearts
Reality Show
Save our Savings
Special Dedication
Stories and Prehistories
The House of Our Dreams
The Jackpot
The Performance is not
cancelled
The Worst Village in England
Welcome aboard!
White Coats, Dark Humour

Collection of sketches

Backstage Bits
Don't panic !
Enough is Enough
Ethan and Eve
For real and for fun
Him and Her
Killer Sketches
Lost time Chronicles
Of Animals and Men
Open Hearts
Sidewalk Chronicles
Stage Briefs
Stories to die for

Monologues

Happy Dogs
Like a fish in the air

*All of Jean-Pierre Martinez's plays can be downloaded
free of charge from his websites:*

<https://jeanpierremartinez.net/>

<https://comediatheque.net/>

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