

ARTICLES

'Savior of the World' translated, performed in Brazil

Musical from Salt Lake City well-received in Portuguese

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Brazil public affairs

After several years of being performed only in English, the musical, "Savior of the World," was translated into Portuguese and performed in the Sao Paulo stake center April 21-23, under the direction of the Brazil South Area presidency and Paulo R. Toffanelli, producer.

"I attended the program in Salt Lake. When I returned, I mentioned it to the Brazil South Area presidency," said Brother Toffanelli. "A few weeks later, they called me in to talk, and that's how the project started."

Translation of the production took six months. "It was a great challenge. we translated more than 20 musical numbers, then the Translation Department of the Church translated the script," Brother Toffanelli explained.

Never in his 52 years had he appeared on stage to act in a play, said Gilmar da Silva, first counselor in the Sao Paulo Brazil Taboao Stake presidency, who portrayed Zacharias. He began to fear that the performance wouldn't succeed. However, he said, "The Lord blessed me and qualified me greatly. I can't count the number of times I felt the Spirit."

According to Brother Toffanelli, it was a great miracle, since casting and rehearsals only began at the beginning of February. They had two and a half months to prepare. "This is very little time. Normally, you would need at least six months. But the dedication and effort of everyone made the difference."



Based on the production that premiered in the Conference Center Theater in 2000, the musical "Savior of the World" is well received in Sao Paulo, Brazil, after being translated into Portuguese.

Photo courtesy Brazil South Area

The cast of about 70 people "is fantastic," he said. "I have never seen such a cohesive group, with no conceit."

The rehearsals occurred twice a week, and because they involved people from various stakes in Sao Paulo and also from the interior of the state, great unity was necessary. "But it was incredible. Without me even knowing about it, groups would gather on other days of the week to rehearse," Brother Toffanelli said.

About 3,600 people attended the five performances. Everything was timed well and the soloists seemed to sing with great feeling. According to the general director, "Everyone involved was strengthened in the faith." And for him, "the youth need spiritual experiences."

Raquel Frederico, from the Sao Paulo Brazil Stake, is the mother of 10-year-old Luigi Pacheco Frederico, who portrayed the shepherd Nathan, son of Eli. Sister Frederico was thrilled with the effects she saw inside her own home. "He was so excited that he resolved, for himself, to be more obedient. He memorized all of his lines and the songs within a week. The presentation made a huge difference," she said. It certainly made a difference in the life of little Luigi, who took advantage of the moment to do some missionary work. "My son invited his violin teacher, who is not a member, to come to the presentation," Sister Frederico said. "And she loved it."

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Seventy, president of the Brazil South Area, shared his feelings about the exhibition: "It was a moving experience to see the inspiration and testimony of 'Savior of the World' translate so completely into a new language. For those of us who saw it first in English, the music and message in Portuguese was equally powerful."

He finalized his thoughts with these words that represent the feelings of all: "When we speak of the Savior, the Spirit of the Lord is present."

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