

**David Joseph**

DECEPTIVE THREADS



*The stage is roughly split into two sides. On one side hang four muslin sacks ranging in size from about 600cm diameter to the size of a hand. Below them sits an old over-locker with three large spools. Threads from these spools lead up to entwine with threads from the muslin sacks and threads and muslin both hang over to the other side of the stage which has two filing cabinets, one with a 1950s typewriter sitting on it. A muslin scrim hangs across the middle upstage area. Above the scrim is a 1m wide stretch of clear white wall used for projections, the surtitle area.*

SCENE 1

*Muslin from the scrim connects to the over-locker table.*

*Music: 'the world's oldest melody', a Hurrian hymn, Syria, circa 1400 BC*

*An old crone, Fate, enters with a candle and sits at the over-locker.*

*Fate*                    You! That are born of mortal womb are slaves by necessity to me, Fate, the sewer, and you shall suffer such things as destiny wove into the strands of your birth, the day you were born to your mother and entered the world. The things that were, the things that are, and those things that are yet to be. Get a wiggle on, you haven't got all bloody day.

You must look to meet whatever the stern sewer twists into the triple threads as they whirl on with the rushing of your destiny. (*She sews*). History, fiction – interwoven and retold – and cosmic time, well that mediates your mortal rhythms and ties you to those that have come before and those that are yet to be. (*She sews again*). All

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things must run on in their appointed time, and your first day, well that fixed your last. . . roughly I tear the threads of flourishing life. (SPX Boom)

*Projected on muslin sacks, hanging threads, muslin scrim, and surtitle area: close up of over-locker mechanism, dancing threads morphing into DNA, and finally, thread magically writing, 'Looking behind me I see the threads of my ancestors' lives unwinding.'*

## SCENE 2

*Hand appears from filing cabinet drawer and types on typewriter. Drawer closes. Opens again and hand throws out DNA letters tied with thread T, A, C, C, A, G, etc.*

*Surtitle projection: 'DNA? Research= mesearch'*

*David's shadow head appears behind scrim, searching. He appears with flashlight crawling on ground. He discovers the DNA letters and their shadow appears on the scrim.*

*David (to self)* TAG, tag . . . CG G . . . it's some kind of code . . . It's the coding for DNA. X, Y, Y, Y, Y . . . The Y chromosome—passed unchanged throughout time from father to son to his son, on and on, unbroken . . .

*David continues to pull on threads, a muslin scarf with Arabic calligraphy is pulled out of the filing cabinet. David lights it with torch. He finds a tag on the end.*

*David* Ancient Lebanese proverb: 'A man can no more forget his father and grandfather than a river can forget its source.' *Drop scarf* Bullshit! I didn't even know my grandfather. My father didn't even know his father—he died when he was a baby. How can you forget someone you never knew?

*Slams filing cabinet drawer closed, lights face from below with torch.*

I feel like I'm being watched. *Torch to audience.* Well of course I'm being watched, you're watching me – *chatty* I'm an actor, you're the audience – you're here to watch me tell a story, and I'm here to play the roles, to change identities.

*Changes into collarless shirt placed on over-locker.* Hi, I'm Dave. . .

So, stories. Here's a real life story: The strangest thing happened to me – I got caught up in an ancient tradition without being conscious of it. My grandfather, the one I never knew, his name was Elias and his nickname was Eli. Now I had no idea about that when I named my own son Eli – that's a strange enough coincidence in itself, but then I found out that it's a Lebanese family tradition to name your first born son after your grandfather. *Pick up DNA letters to place them beside filing cabinet.* Maybe the threads connecting me to the past are not as fragile as I think.

*Arabic music fades up. David goes behind scrim. Family photo with Elias projected on scrim, David stands behind photo of Elias's face with torch lighting his face – their two faces combine.*

### SCENE 3

Image on scrim fades to photo of Kfarsghab, Mt. Lebanon. David enters as Lebanese storyteller with moustache, waistcoat, fez, and *darbukka*. Talks to audience as if they're David.

*Storyteller*      Kiffeh, Habibi! Oldest son of the youngest son of the son of the mountain. Let me tell you the story of your ancestors, let me tell you in the tradition of the great Lebanese storytellers.

*Opens old suitcase that is beside over-locker. Digs in dirt in suitcase.*

Daoud, your ancestors' village is nestled high in the mountains, near the cedars of God, ancient cedars, holy woods. *Finds bible in dirt in suitcase. Projection of cedar grove.* You are digging for roots in a holy forest.

Ahhh! Scribbled in the margins of this ancient bible is the first written record of your village, Kfarsghab. *Storyteller drums on darbukka as he tells the story.* It records an attack in the year 1283 by the brutal warlords, the Mamlukes. Your ancestors fled to a beautiful and inaccessible grotto, *projection of a cave* where they were besieged for seven long years, suffering vicissitudes and depravations that you could never dream of, the innocent ones born therein never feeling the caress of the sun's warm touch. Meanwhile, the wily Mamlukes, tiring of their vigil, convinced the villagers to descend from their hideaway on the promise of a safe release.

Oh! How they suffered! The men were swiftly massacred and the women and children taken as hostages and slaves.

So much suffering . . . Centuries of bloodshed and violence . . . Brutal men battling for possession of these mountains, gateway to the splendours of the Holy Lands.

*Return to projection of cedar grove.*

For this place was sacred long before our Lord Jesus Christ was born. The holy cedars of Mt. Lebanon once sheltered the Sumerian Gilgamesh, hero of the first written story. Noah used these cedars to build his ark, and King Solomon sought them for the construction of his temple. Still they stand, five thousand years old. The Roman Emperor Hadrian, Mamluk Caliphs and Maronite Patriarchs have all issued decrees protecting the ancient stand. Even her royal highness Queen Victoria deemed them worthy of protection.

But the people of Lebanon have not been so protected,  
*closes suitcase* many of us have been refugees, fleeing  
war and turmoil and famine . . . Daoud! Your  
grandfather, Elias, was one of them . . .

*Drumming fades out as storyteller backs out behind scrim.*

#### SCENE 4

*Journey sequence starts with projection of Bartlett's nineteenth-century print of Lebanese village, and 'Kfarsghab, Mt. Lebanon, 1896' written on surtitle area. Young Elias appears dressed in cap and jacket. SPX of village life, chopping wood, villagers bidding Elias farewell. Elias sits on suitcase as other Bartlett prints are projected and smaller images appear on suitcase: people working in the fields, camels at an ancient Lebanese ruin.*

*SPX changes to that of a busy Arabic port. Images of Port Said, Arabic seamen with huge ropes on the dock, immigrants travelling on a ship's deck; on the suitcase projection of postcard of the ship, Arman Behic, (the ship that Elias took to Australia) in a stormy sea.*

*SPX: Pairouz singing 'Sister Marie Keyrouz Alleluia.' Projection of video of sea. On surtitle area a large rope breaks, a boom is heard and we see Elias behind the scrim, falling then somehow floating in this sea. Overlaid is a projection of a nineteenth-century map of the Middle East.*

*SPX and Projections change to that of an Australian port at the turn of the century. A quay, an immigration arrivals hall. SPX of official telling new arrivals to 'Get a wiggle on!' Elias jumps down from behind scrim and is in Australia. Projections of photos of Australian bush, and SPX Australian bird sounds with,*

*Elias Voiceover* When I land in Adelaide, they change my name. I am Elias Yusuf Daniel-but the immigration man, he could not understand me, he write down Elias Joseph, so that's who I become.

Oh, it's a beautiful land, this one. When I first come here, a man from my country give me a suitcase *pick up suitcase* full of cotton, coloured ribbons, needles. Fancy things. He teach me: 'Hello missus. This one very nice, two shillings.' I'm walking, selling to the farmer's wives. I stay on the railway line *projection of workers laying railway* to not get lost. I save money, I buy a horse and I travel further and further, all the way to Toowoomba *projection of old photo of Toowoomba*, where I married a girl from my village, Em. It was very good to grow vegetables there *projection in scrim of boy working in market garden, on suitcase image of lemons*. I bought land and I open a shop to sell all the things I grow. And I would drive to Brisbane markets to buy oranges and lemons to sell to those people in the bush. When I had children, twelve I had! *Projection of family photo on suitcase and surtitle area* My sons would drive for me – they were good mechanics. My daughters, they were dressmakers – the best in town. They were good cooks too – my wife, she taught them to make the *labneh*, just like my mother did, from the real goat's milk, and one of my girls, Maney, she ran a SP hooky business out of her bedroom window – she loves the horses that one. You know, they even named a street after me – Joseph Street – eh, it's not even my real surname.

*Projection of Joseph family shop becomes larger as Elias enters scrim through front door of shop.*

#### SCENE 5

*SPX: Typewriter sounds.*

*Projection of Elias's actual application for naturalization.*

*David reads from scrim* Application for Naturalisation. Elias Joseph. Born on Naxos Island? Grecian archipelago?

*Projection of official document requesting to know whether Elias is a 'coloured man.'*

*Projection of affidavit used in Elias's application for naturalization. Important words get projected on David's back as he walks in front of it, reading aloud some sections:*

*David* Sir. . . Application for naturalization. . . Received from Elias Joseph. . . I have the honour to inform you that the applicant is not a coloured man. When a boy of ten years of age he went with his parents from Naxos Island to Port Said, where both his parents died. Subsequently coming to Australia, he arrived in Adelaide in 1898. For twelve years he followed the occupation of hawker and was never proceeded against for a breach of the Law. Arrived in Queensland . . . Toowoomba. In 1910 he married the daughter of an Assyrian storekeeper . . . Applicant has recently purchased a small farm. . . In all his business transactions he has proved himself an honest man. He speaks the English language fairly fluently and generally bears a very good character in Toowoomba. The only document he can produce in support of his statement that he was born at Naxos Island, Grecian Archipelago, is his marriage certificate, but all inquiries leave no doubt about his nationality. I have the honour to be, Sir, Your obedient servant . . .

*David finishes reading, turns to audience.* I thought he as Lebanese! — I thought I was Lebanese!

*Light comes up over filing cabinet. David opens filing cabinet drawer and pulls out a turn-of-the-century newspaper, He reads aloud:*

Brisbane Courier, 1893. 'The Lebanese are the most objectionable class to have in any community.'

*Bulldog clips newspaper to threads hanging from ceiling and places it back into filing cabinet. Pulls out another newspaper.*

The Lantern, Adelaide 1899. 'These aliens, the Lebanese, besides breeding disease and hybrid children – neither black nor white nor brindle – live on a lower scale. They are of an inferior race -inferior in morals, inferior in enlightenment, and inferior in standards of living. What have we to gain from them? Considerably less than nothing, for we have all to lose.'

*Connects newspaper to threads and places back in filing cabinet. Retrieves another paper. Whilst reading this article, David covers his face with the paper, becoming an angry masked newspaper 'monster.'*

The Argus, 1900. 'The town and district of Ballarat are now alive to the serious menace involved in the Lebanese question. What brought the Lebanese here in such numbers and who keep them here? They came along quickly and unobtrusively like the rabbits at first, but the community has wakened up to find both pests swarming, until the pessimistic prophecy is possible that Ballarat must be given up to the Lebanese and the rabbits. The rabbits may have a share of it, but the Lebanese not a pennyworth more if this journal can by its fearless denunciation prevent them. They are dangerous people, these hawkers, and country people must watch them. It will be a sad day for a White Australia if Lebanese immigration is permitted to continue in this country.'

*Last newspaper is placed in the filing cabinet. From a lower drawer, David finds a file containing Government Acts. He stands in front of the filing cabinet and delivers in an official manner:*

1901–Federation–and the First Act of Parliament is the Immigration Restriction Act.

'The immigration into the Commonwealth of the following persons is prohibited, namely: –Any person who when asked to do so by an officer fails to write out at dictation and sign in the presence of the officer a



passage of fifty words in length in any European language directed by the office.'

*In a consoling manner:*

1903—An act relating to naturalization.

The following persons are NOT eligible to apply for a certificate of naturalization: natives of Asia, Africa, or the Islands of the Pacific, excepting (of course) New Zealand.'

*As David walks away from the filing cabinet, the file that he's still holding is connected to thread that spools out of the cabinet. The house lights come up as David delivers this speech, initially talking to himself, then getting more involved with the audience.*

White Australia had drawn a line in the sand—and a literal line on the edges of Europe. Lebanon was just on the wrong side of that line.

And so for Elias to secure a future in his new home he had to lie about his birthplace, he had to leap over that line—just far enough to be white. Naxos Island as only 800km from Kfarsghab—less than what he'd walked from Adelaide to Toowoomba!

Wow! I never realized racism impacted so deeply in my own family—on the life of my own grandfather. Racism then, racism now, the same threads running through my family, through me, you, us, the whole country, with what's happening now. With how we're treating asylum seekers. It was Howard, that mealy-mouthed coward. I'll never forget that photo on the front page of the Age—the asylum seeker with his lips sew up—I just burst into tears. That was when I stopped reading the newspaper every day. We are losing our humanity—if we haven't already lost it. Doing dodgy multi-million

dollar deals with corrupt and cruel regimes, paying people smugglers so we don't have to deal with the pleas of these innocent and desperate people. I mean animals have more rights than asylum seekers in this so-called civilized nation.

*As David becomes more irate, he gets more and more tangled in the threads coming from the filing cabinet.*

What have we become? An international pariah that's what! Condemned by the UN, flouting the conventions that we agreed to uphold. And the secrecy! "Operational matters" my arse. . . Operation Sovereign Borders, the Australian Border Force Act. Do you know what that's about? That's about locking people in prison for telling the truth, for telling the truth about human rights abuses perpetuated by our own government. And ASIO! Don't forget them, they're in on it all. No other Intelligence agency in the West have been granted the powers of detention that they've been handed and all with NO accountability. It's dangerous people! It's fucking dangerous!

SCENE 6

*SPX of ancient music interrupts David. Fates appear on muslin sacks.*

*Fate 3*            Have you finished? Got anything more to say?

*Fate 1*            And still destiny rushes on, the triple threads entwined,

*Fate 2*            No mortal care or anxious prayer can alter Fate's design.

*Fate 1*            Some torn some knotted, frayed or strong –

*Fate 2*            there for ye to find.

*Fate 3*            Hey! Don't forget ya mother's line!

*Projection on scrim of muslin flapping in rough wind resolves to photo of Roald Amundsen at the South Pole. David removes the threads wrapping him as he says:*

*David*            My mother's line. . . Roald Amundsen – the famed Norwegian Antarctic explorer, discoverer of the South Pole. He's supposedly a relative of mine on my Mum's side. At least that's what my Mum's Dad, Fred, used to tell us grandkids – or, as he affectionately called us – the little prawn heads. His surname was Ommundson – Ommundson, Amundsen – well, you know there might be some truth in it. But there is an old Norwegian saying *open filing cabinet drawer and put on policeman's jacket and cap, in Norwegian accent: 'The coat of truth is often lined with lies.'* And I think Fred might have worn that coat from time to time. *Do up jacket.* He could definitely spin a good yarn.

*Fred as cop*        Yeah, life was tough. Dad was crippled with arthritis, he wasn't earning tuppence. I had to leave school at fourteen, got a job as an apprentice, never made it to 'you-and-I-verse-ity.'

And then in '37 I think it was, the New South Wales police were running a special recruitment drive – they wanted blokes to stop that damned Victorian polio epidemic from entering New South.

They gave me a uniform and a baton and posted to Barooga, on the Murray – lovely spot, do you know it? . . . Anyway, I had to stand on that single land bridge and stop the cars crossing the border. I'd tell the driver to wind his window down and I'd stick my noggin in, have a bit of a gander and if anyone looked a bit crook, I'd make them turn around and go straight back where they came from. I don't know how many healthy people I sent back! I had no medical training. How would I know

who had polio and who didn't? I was ordered to use my discretion. What a bloody joke!

Anyway, I liked wearing a uniform—I noticed I got a few extra looks from the lady folk—so when I got back to Sydney I applied for a permanent position in the force. Well, bugger me, I got in and for a bit of a lark I joined the police choir. Well, in the choir we sang straight stuff, but there were four of us that weren't too bad and we jazzed it up to have a bit of a laugh. We sang in pubs and at fundraisers, etc. So, then in 1942, one of the fellas entered us in the 2UW amateur hour. We were all on duty that night. We pulled up in our police cars, sirens blaring, leapt out, all in uniform—ran in, sang 'Kentucky Babe' and sped off again. Well, strike me pink, we won! And the next day the police commissioner bawled us out for taking time off—then he shook our hands and said we were the best damned ambassadors the force had ever had!

*Turn on fairy lights around stage.*

Well, our fame continued to spread and after a couple of years we got offered top billing at Melbourne's Tivoli theatre. One hundred quid a week was more money that we could imagine. The force wouldn't give us leave, so we quit. We called ourselves 'The Four Guardsmen' but Mo, the cheeky bugger, used to call us 'The Four Garbage-men.'

*Exit behind scrim.*

## SCENE 7

*MC Voice Over with 1950s show-time music and slide show of Tivoli history.*

Ladies and gentlemen, the Tivoli theatre, affectionately known to all who love entertainment as the Tiv, established in 1893 at the old Opera House in Sydney.

Bubbling over with action, comedy, colour, and charm. Featuring the greatest variety bill ever presented and a brilliant constellation of overseas stars – Harry Houdini, Gracie Fields, Winnie Atwell, and Sir Laurence Olivier. This gay and sparkling revue is your rendezvous with rhythm – where beautiful show girls parade and dance. Home to Australia’s favourite comic, Roy Rene, better known as Mo. Now fifty years on and still going strong. Visiting all the important Australian metropoli – Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Toowoomba . . .

And introducing our newest act, sure to win a place in the hearts of all music lovers, the kings of comic harmony – The Four Guardsmen. (Black and white cigarettes are always used in Tivoli productions – the artists prefer them!)

*The Four Guardsmen slide show with recording of them singing ‘Sweet Kentucky Babe,’ ‘Powder Your Face with Sunshine,’ and ‘The Same Ol’ Shillelagh.’*

#### SCENE 8

*Last image of the Four Guardsmen is of their faces poking through sheet music. David positions himself behind the scrim, behind the image of Fred’s face. As the music fades, David pokes his head through the muslin, and says:*

In my experience, musicians are the scum of the earth.

*David enters* I’ll never forget when Fred said that to me. It was after mum and dad had got divorced, and Fred thought some discipline would be good for his eldest grandson. So he suggested Duntroon Military academy. So I applied for a scholarship, and I got it, but I was too young so I repeated year eleven. Fate, huh? I met a whole new bunch of guys. They were the artsy, muso, theatre gang and I’d finally found my tribe. I’d always tapped along to songs but now all of a sudden I was playing drumkit in this teenage psychedelic rock band called Reg

Mushroom and girls were throwing themselves at me and I'd finally found my purpose in life!

So, it was Christmas lunch, 1980, and I very proudly announced to the assembled family that I wasn't going to go to Duntroon Military academy – I was going to go to art school, I was going to become a muso. And that's when Fred said to me, 'Musicians are the scum of the earth.'

*Phone rings. To answer, David opens filing cabinet drawer.*

*David*            Hello?

*Trish*            Oh, hi darling, how are you?

*David*            Oh, Mum! Hey! How are you going?

*Trish*            I'm fine, I'm really fine. How's everything going?

*David*            Ah, good, but I'm in the middle of a show at the moment  
...

*Trish*            Like, you're actually in the middle of a show so I shouldn't be talking?

*David*            No, no, it's ok, what's up?

*Trish*            Oh, no, no, it's just that I was remembering today some stuff about my dad, and I remembered going to this afternoon tea. . . And one of the women there, just happened to say, 'So, Fred, are you still working for the Secret Service?'

*David*            What?

*Trish* Well, you know, that really just didn't mean anything to me, it went over my head. The next day he probably thought about it, and he probably thought I'd wondered what was going on so he decided to tell me. I can still see us, sitting in the car, driving along Anzac parade, and he sort of said, 'Well you know yesterday when' – (and this woman's nickname was Chooky, her real name was Beryl but for some reason she was called Chook and we kids called her Chooky) – he said, 'you know when Chooky said something about me working for the Secret Service,' and I must have said, 'yes.' And he said, 'Well,' I think he said, 'Well, yes, it is something like that, what I do. It's very important. That we're not to discuss it at all.' And to be honest, all I remember is thinking, 'Oh, gee, I wish I could go to school and tell everybody – that'd make me important.' . . . *David slowly reaches down into the filing cabinet and during the rest of the conversation dresses in a 1950s spy overcoat and trilby.* Oh, dear, so silly. So that's the first time I really knew. But when I look back now I can remember various things as a very young child.

*David* Oh, yeah, like what sort of stuff?

*Trish* I remember particularly one phone call because it wasn't long after we had the phone put on. And this man rang and asked for Mr. Jenkins. Which, you know, I knew nothing about Mr. Jenkins, and must have told him, 'No, sorry, you've got the wrong number,' and hung up. But I mentioned it to Mum and she said, 'No, you must always tell me whoever rings. Anybody rings, just get me.' So that was also obviously some kind of connection going on there.

*David* Yeah, I guess it was his alias.

*Trish* And there were periods when he was away for a while. You know, he'd be away for a week or maybe two. . .

*David* I remember reading that the CIA sent their agents on torture camps – is that what they were?

*Trish* Well I think they would have been. Because I vaguely remember one particular time when he was pretty nasty when he came back, in fact he seemed to be in a bit of a state when he came home, and very stressed. But, you know, you don't, you just don't think about it at the time. Well when we were small children, you just accept that you father is what he says he is. So that, you know, I've been, I have been trying to think more about if I could find other memories but that's about it.

*David slams filing cabinet door closes. Dressed now as Fred as spy he turns upstage.*

*Fred is lit by side film noir light.*

*Fred* The name's Jenkins, Attorney General's department.

*Opens coat which is projected on with 1950s ASIO surveillance footage. Dramatic spy music.*

*Close coat, tip up hat.*

*Fred* My name's Fred Ommundson, Jenkins is my alias, I work for ASIO, C branch. I keep unwanted aliens out of Australia, I keep our way of life secure . . . I keep families apart, I keep fathers away from their children and I keep wives lonely – what was his name? . . . Yeah the kids, they wrote letters to the PM, said they wanted their Dad back. Moscow – it's a bloody long way away. . . *singing* Maybe I should have kept singing, I was so happy back then, life on the road with all those Tivoli dancing girls. . . the lights, the stage, the curtains – I was sent behind the iron curtain, you know, stationed in



Rome, trips to Vienna, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia – it was during the revolution, exciting times, you wouldn't be dead for quids. . . Frankl, Abe Frankl, that was his name. Poor bastard, didn't see his kids for thirty years. . . And then there was the Petrov Affair, what a bloody dog's breakfast that was – '51, peak of the Cold War, I was handler for a Russian speaking Polish agent sent to watch a Ukrainian doctor, employed by us to befriend Vladimir Petrov. We were never sure whether he was a double agent – the doctor, I mean, not Petrov. Petrov? He was just a disgruntled clerk running a sly grog shop out of the Russian embassy – Menzies' cold war triumph . . . Yeah, well that's enough of that. . . .

*Walks into projection of rows of filing cabinets on scrim.*

*Distorted typewriter SPX. Projection of letter from contemporary National Archives. David enters with letter.*

*David* This is the letter I received from the National Archives denying me access to my grandfather's ASIO files.

Decision: After examining this record I have decided not to release the record for public access.

Reasons for Decision: The public disclosure of this information would reasonably be expected to cause resentment and possible retaliation on the part of foreign governments, and thus damage Australia's international relations.

## SCENE 9

*David files letter in filing cabinet, pulls out another paper which he holds up. Projected onto it are photographs of Fred, then Elias, then David.*

*David pulls open bottom drawer. ASIO surveillance film is projected onto it. David plays rhythms on papers.*

*Projections including 'cut-ups' of photos of David's grandfathers, 1950's ASIO files marked 'secret,' video of typewriter typing, 'What is your name?,' video of closeup of over-locker etc. build as percussion builds. David climbs onto filing cabinet. Video of ASIO clock grows until David releases a lemon from filing cabinet drawer which dances over clock face and explodes.*

*Blackout. David pokes his head out filing cabinet, looks around. Once he disappears, projections and drumming build even more and include a photo of a distressed Evdokia Petrov, filing cabinets stretching to infinity, a contemporary Australian Immigration poster, 'NO WAY. You will not make Australia home' and contemporary newspaper headlines with hardline attitudes to asylum seekers. Interspersed are snippets of images from the whole play, e.g. 'Is he a coloured man?'. Drumming builds to a dramatic finale.*

*Blackout and silence.*

#### SCENE 10

*LX and ancient music fade up slowly. David unties threads of smallest muslin sack to reveal the labneh within which he prepares with olive oil and salt – the process fitting in with following text.*

*David*                    When you start to untangle the threads that connect you to the past, and uncover what has been lost, forgotten or secreted away, you see that you have been moulded by those threads. That you are a mixture brought together by those threads of the past into the present which you share with your contemporaries, all of us – children of the past and of this moment, now.

*David shares labneh and pita bread with audience.*