Away In A Manger Human Video©

Theme: Human Video (mime to music) of carol “Away In A Manger”

Cast: As few or as many as are available/desired. If using actors of different ages/sizes have the smallest actors in the center and distribute the larger actors outward from there, going smallest to largest, (meaning that your taller actors will be on the extreme left and right hand sides as well as at the most upstage locations. You will then coach your actors in such a way that the smallest actors will have the smallest movement of hands and face, and the tallest actors will have the most grand, exaggerated, sweeping gestures. This will appear as a kind of “fanning” movement with all movement and activity focused toward the center of the stage. Ensure that sufficient room is allowed around each actor that there will be no conflict between actors.

Visual Center Spots (VCS): In writing this script it is expected that there will be two imaginary visual center spots (hereafter referred to as VCS in this script) of activity to which the attention of the actors will be focused, thus bringing the audience to focus on that imaginary source of activity.

Lower Visual Center Spot (LVCS) will be a mimed spot on the floor at downstage center. Actors, regardless of number used, will be focused on that LVCS downstage center location of activity in all they do and say when referring to the manger or the baby.

Upper Visual Center Spot (UVCS) will be an imaginary spot on the ceiling above the audience in a central location. All actors will be focused on that UVCS in all they do and say when referring to the sky, the stars, and also to Jesus after that spot in the script where the words, “I love you Lord Jesus looks down from the sky” are used.

LVCS Movements: When directions state to look to LVCS this will mean that any actor to the left of LVCS will be looking somewhat downward and toward the right. Any actor to the right of LVCS will be looking somewhat downward and to the left. Any actors upstage from (behind) LVCS will be looking somewhat downward and more or less straight forward. The intent of all this is to assist the audience in focusing on an imaginary action spot where the mimed baby and cradle are located. You might want to actually have a real manger complete with doll during the first few rehearsals just to assist the actors in focusing on that LVCS. You may even decide to have a real manger and doll in that spot during the performance, however we do not really recommend it since the intent is to assist the audience in becoming a part of the process whereby all “are able to visualize” the manger in their own mind. If you have the lighting capability we suggest a single tight spot shining more or less directly down on the floor at that LVCS. This will give a
much stronger impact than a real manger.

When instructions call for hands to move toward LVCS this will mean that all actors will have hands open, palms forward. All actors to left of LVCS will have right hand at waist level, extended slightly to the right side of body and left hand slightly higher and directly in front of center of body. All actors to right of LVCS will have left hand at waist level, extended slightly to the left side of body and right hand slightly higher and directly in front of center of body. All actors to upstage from (behind) LVCS will have both hands at waist level, extended slightly forward from body and directly in front of hips.

UVCS Movements: When directions state to look to UVCS this will mean that any actor to the left of UVCS will be looking somewhat upward and toward the right. Any actor to the right of UVCS will be looking somewhat upward and to the left. Any actors upstage from (behind) UVCS will be looking somewhat upward and more or less straight forward. The intent of all this is to assist the audience in focusing on an imaginary action spot where the stars, sky, (and Jesus in latter portion of song) are located. You might want to actually have a real item hanging from the ceiling during the first few rehearsals just to assist the actors in focusing on that UVCS. You may even decide to leave that item hanging in that spot during the performance, however we do not really recommend it since the intent is to assist the audience in becoming a part of the process whereby all “are able to visualize” the stars, sky, and Jesus in their own mind. If you have the lighting capability we suggest a single sparkling light at that UVCS. This will give a much stronger impact than any other item.

When instructions call for hands to move toward UVCS this will mean that all actors will have hands open, palms upward. All actors to left of UVCS will have right hand just below shoulder level, extended slightly to the right side of body and left hand slightly higher and directly in front of center of body. All actors to right of UVCS will have left hand just below shoulder level, extended slightly to the left side of body and right hand slightly higher and directly in front of center of body. All actors to upstage from (behind) UVCS will have both hands at shoulder level, extended slightly forward from body and directly in front of shoulders.

Offstage Direction: When script calls for movement or gaze in offstage direction this will be away from center stage; therefore for actors on left side of stage this would be toward left, for those on right side of stage this would be toward right.
NOTE: alternate staging possibility is to do full or partial run through with younger actors and then gradually bring in older actors.

Script:

*NOTE: instructions are for words on the following line.*

All start with hands folded in front of chest, smiles.
As song begins, faces and hands move to UVCS, then smoothly down to LVCS on 
“manger”

**AWAY IN A MANGER**

Focus hands and gaze on LVCS, slight frown, look back and forth at each other as though sharing in a secret.

**NO CRIB FOR A BED**

Soft, gentle smiles, focus on LVCS

**THE LITTLE LORD JESUS**

Hand and gaze focus stays on LVCS but hands come closer together as though cupping, holding a baby.

**LAY DOWN HIS SWEET HEAD**

Hands and gaze focus on UVCS, eyes widen in wonder, smiles expand

**THE STARS IN THE BRIGHT SKY**

Gracefully hands and gaze move from UVCS to LCVS

**LOOK DOWN WHERE HE LAY**

Hands folded at chest level, wide smiles, look back and forth at each other.

**THE LITTLE LORD JESUS**

Gently bring centerstage index finger to lips as a command for silence.

**ASLEEP ON THE HAY.**

Concern on faces, look to offstage location
THE CATTLE ARE LOWING,
Gaze focus on LCVS, hands cupped just below chin, show concern

THE BABY AWAKES,
Focus hands and gaze on LCVS

BUT LITTLE LORD JESUS
Look at each other in amazement, eyes wide.

NO CRYING HE MAKES.
Gaze on UCVS, hands in prayer

I LOVE YOU, LORD JESUS;
Gaze and hands to UCVS

LOOK DOWN FROM THE SKY,
Gaze and hands in lower offstage direction

AND STAY BY MY SIDE
Move gaze, hands toward UCVS

UNTIL MORNING IS NIGH.
Gaze at UCVS, hands at shoulder height, palms up, cupping hands

BE NEAR ME, LORD JESUS,
Gaze at UCVS, hands LCVS

I ASK YOU TO STAY
Gaze at UCVS, hands at shoulder height, palms up, cupping hands

CLOSE BY ME FOR EVER,
Gaze at UCVS, clasp hands under chin

AND LOVE ME, I PRAY.
Gaze at others around, hands out in front, palms up, rotate body slowly from center to offstage direction

BLESS ALL THE DEAR CHILDREN

Gaze at UCVS, widening smile, hands out in front, palms up.

IN YOUR TENDER CARE,

Gaze to UCVS, hands moving to UCVS

AND FIT US FOR HEAVEN,

Hands at UCVS, bow head, freeze

TO LIVE WITH YOU THERE.

Off stage.