**The Conference of the Birds**

**By Jean-Claude Carrier**

The play presents you and your actors with an occasion for imagination and magic. The only suggestion of a set is a large oriental carpet and, as the Times critic describes it, "The play itself is a flying carpet, gliding us aloft into a land of mystery, splendor and ritual. A nation of birds is in crisis, and urged on by one of their flock, the Hoopoe, they chart a path to find their king." There are moments of farce and despair as they attempt to cross the seven valleys with their disturbing riddles. Some die, some drop out, while others continue their quest. At last, the survivors come into the presence of the Great One where the secret is discovered—that they, themselves are the embodiment of the divine.