

## ELS PASTORETS



### HISTORY:

“Els Pastorets” (“The Little Shepherds”) is a traditional Christmas play that originated in Catalonia a long time ago. In the Middle Ages, it was performed as part of the religious Christmas Eve traditions. First it was in Latin. In the 16th century this show was forbidden in churches and its popularity declined. In the 19th century, some amateur groups represented the play again in Barcelona, but it was not so popular as it is today. A Catalan writer, Josep Maria Folch i Torres, wrote a version of “The little Shepherds” in 1916 and it became very popular all over Catalonia. Although the tradition is based on a religious event, Folch's text is not religious but comic and folkloric.



### THE PLOT

Two shepherds travel to see the birth of Jesus Christ in their dreams. People from the village have told the boys about this magical event. They are going to live funny adventures. The plot is divided in three different stories. The first is about Joseph and Mary, recently married, looking for a place to sleep and the birth of Jesus. The second shows the battle between the angels and the demons (Satan and Lucifer). In the story, there's a fight between the good and the evil. The good is directed by Saint Michael, helped by Saint Gabriel, and the evil is directed by Lucifer. Finally, in the third part (the funniest one), the main characters are the two young shepherds.

## THE MAIN CHARACTERS:

The shepherds are called Rovelló (a kind of little mushroom) and Lluquet. They are the main characters who represent little innocent shepherds. They dress in typical catalan peasant clothes from the beginning of the 20th century. Both boys wear a typical Catalan cap (called “barretina”). They are not very



smart and brave, so the audience sometimes tells them when the evil characters appear behind them. Everybody knows the story, and children usually interact with the actors. Some families see this play every year or participate in it, because it's a tradition. Satan and Lucifer are not terrifying. Children aren't scared because the story is a popular comedy based on a serious fact, the birth of Jesus.



Beasts of the hell



Satan and Lucifer.

## “ELS PASTORETS” (today):


Nowadays, “Els pastorets” is performed by amateur groups, schools and other associations all over Catalonia around Christmas time. In Terrassa, our town, the play is represented by a theatre amateur company called Centre Social Catòlic and at school too.



The shepherds in  
El Social of  
Terrassa.

## PLACES AROUND CATALONIA WHERE “ELS PASTORETS” ARE PERFORMED:



 = places where “the  
pastorets” are  
performed.