

Catalogue of Magical Moonshine Theatre School Programs for 2010-11 Season



Magical Moonshine Theatre has over 30 years of experience in presenting assembly programs in California schools, in addition to mainstage performances coast to coast in the US and in 18 countries around the world.

Recipients of numerous awards and honors for their original plays for youth, the company is known for consistent excellence and reliability. Educators routinely refer to MMT productions as the best they have seen. When you get a MMT assembly you are getting the original founders and creative artists performing for your students, with over 60 years combined experience.

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GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SCHOOL PROGRAMMERS:

Length and Age Appropriateness: All Magical Moonshine Theatre assembly programs run between 45-50 minutes long. All are suitable for K-6, some are suitable for pre-k, and some for middle and high school ages.

Technical needs vary somewhat, according to the show performed, but all are designed to be technically simple and versatile to ensure success in a variety of school performance settings. We bring staging, curtains, lights, sound equipment in addition to the production, so that we can create a theater atmosphere even in a bare multipurpose room or gymnasium. If your school has a stage, we will generally adapt to perform on your stage, and if your school does not have a suitable indoor space we do have programs and outdoor staging that may allow us to perform outdoors at the school (this will vary and should be discussed with us to help us find the best program for your conditions.)

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Email: mail@magicalmoonshine.org Website: <http://magicalmoonshine.org>

Accessibility: Many of our performances are multicultural and some are bilingual (Spanish/English) and some are not language dependent. Special needs students routinely watch and enjoy our programs.

Pricing for Assemblies: Our school fees may vary, depending on distance and situation, but are based upon a standard fee of \$585.00 for a single assembly program and \$895.00 for a double program (two programs back to back). In certain areas we have funding support (call for info about your area) and in some areas more distant from us we may need a tour including several schools or venues in order to offer the standard fee.

Pricing for public shows, fund raisers, etc. Please note that our school assembly prices are substantially discounted from our standard public show fees. For qualifying schools interested in using a Magical Moonshine Theatre program as a fundraiser we have a special program called "Puppet Fridays" which combines assembly programs with a public show at a very substantial discount that allows your school to possibly cover all of the Magical Moonshine Theatre fee and make money for other programs or activities as well (see Puppet Fridays, page 6 for more information.)

Teacher Support and Frameworks: Magical Moonshine Theatre has extensive teacher curriculum support for before and after the performance, including activities based on the California Frameworks and Standards as well as many creative projects for students of all ages, all included with our assembly packages.

Animal Folktales of the Americas

Note to school programmers: Our award winning Animal Folktales of the Americas is a constantly growing series of programs as opposed to a single title. A school assembly program generally consists of one or two titles as some titles are about 20-25 minutes long, and others 45-50 minutes.

Two shorter titles are usually paired to create a 45-50 minute program, although 30 minute programs are available for younger audiences.



Animal Folktales of the Americas, Series Description: The oral traditions and literature of North, South, and Central America are rich with humorous and instructive stories about our furred, feathered, and scaled neighbors. "Animal Folktales of the Americas" is a celebration of the cultural richness that we enjoy on our two American

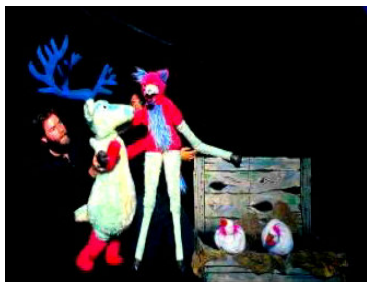
continents.

Using original, large scale puppets, masks and live music and song, the internationally known Magical Moonshine Theatre presents an ever growing collection of original dramas based on traditional folktales which may include anything from a story from the Andes Mountains about how the fox and the condor brought food to the earth, a tale from the Bering Strait area about a fox and caribou who decide to exchange legs, a Native American story about Coyote, Mountain Ram and Grizzly Bear, some of the exploits of Br'er Rabbit, a tale of an Armadillo family, to a Mexican version of Aesop's Fables. In addition to the dramatics and staging unique to the puppet and mask theatre, the stories are enriched with live music played on instruments ranging from the modern to the ancient; from the accordion to the traditional charango and zamponia from Peru, the American banjo, and the Native American drums and flute.



Animalitos (the little animals)- A collection of Aesop's fables woven together in a magical puppet dance. A rabbit starts a race with a tortoise, but seeing that he has plenty of time, he wanders off, and gets involved with a fox who is trying to court a crane with a romantic dinner for two. With some clever tricks they manage to get some food to serve but things go awry when the fox talks the rabbit into being the waiter for the meal. Meanwhile the tortoise is getting closer and closer to the finish line.....

The Armadillo's Rancho- This story from Argentina tells of a wealthy Fox who tries to take advantage of a poor Armadillo, making her work his garden for him. He thinks he is getting the best part of the deal, but the Armadillo is smarter than he is at every turn and in the end succeeds in setting things right once and for all.



The Fox and Elk Make a

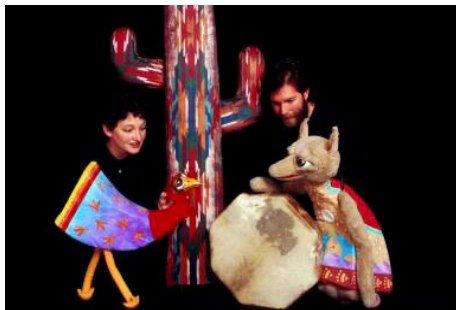
Trade- In this story a fox and elk decide that they are not happy with the way they are made, so they decide to switch arms and legs with each other. The fox, now with very long arms and legs, finds that she can no longer hunt, and is in danger of starving. The elk with the short fox arms and legs can not reach the leaves on the trees that he is used to eating. Both finally realize that they were much better off the way they were originally and in the end exchange arms

and legs again, happy to have their old limbs back. The story is humorously set to music reminiscent of pop tunes of the '50s.



The Fox and the Condor- In this mythological story from South America, there is little food on the earth while in the clouds the birds have much food. The Condor, the king of the birds takes pity on a hungry fox and carries him up to the clouds to eat, but the greedy fox does not stop eating until he falls from the cloud and his belly bursts open, spreading seeds all over the earth. It is these seeds from which the plants on earth have descended (so the tale tells us.)

Coyote and Grizzly Bear- Native Americans of the Western part of this continent tell many stories about the trickster, Coyote. In this story from the plains states, Coyote plays a trick on the ungrateful Grizzly Bear, thus saving the life of Mountain Ram. Although presented as a Native American folktale here, the theme of this story is universal, and appears in tales from many cultures around the world. This folktale is told with masks and Native American flute and drum.



Coyote Sings-

In the Native American story, Coyote Sings, the crazy buffoon, Coyote tries desperately to learn a song. This combined with his bungling attempts to hunt for food and impress all his neighbors with his personal skills make for hilarious slapstick. Southwest motifs and designs and Mexican folk tunes make this bilingual show a very popular addition.

Br'er Rabbit and the Number Nine Shoes-In this African American trickster tale, the clever Br'er Rabbit plays a trick on Br'er Bear, and steals his fish from him. Br'er Fox watches the whole trick, but when he tries it himself his efforts end in disaster. Once again Br'er Rabbit survives by relying on his wits. The story is told with large, direct-manipulation puppets, live banjo music and singing.

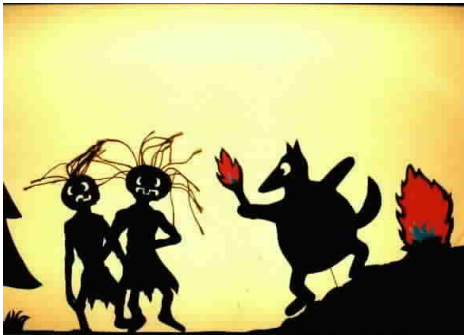


Brer Rabbit and the Goober Patch-Another trickster, Brer Rabbit comes to us from Africa, but has settled right in to American Folklore. In this puppet tale, Brer (short for Brother) Fox decides to plant a garden, and Br'er Rabbit decides to help himself. The fox decides to set a trap for the rabbit but Brer Rabbit is one rabbit who can take care of himself, and Br'er Fox does not end up with the prey that he bargained for.



The Jaguar's Fountain- In the rain forests of South America all living things sing in harmony with each other. But then the chords of disharmony sound as drought descends upon the land. The greedy Jaguar proceeds to force the smaller and weaker animals to dig a well. Soon there is water again in the rain forest and it is controlled by the Jaguar. But there is one animal in the forest who will stand up to the Jaguar. He is the Rabbit. Armed only with his humor and wits, he alone dares to challenge the Jaguar and his henchmen until justice prevails and the balance of nature is restored. In *The Jaguar's Fountain* the puppets and scenery have their own musical sounds created by a variety of hand crafted non-traditional as well as traditional instruments.

Does That Scare You?- a Southeast Asian Folktale from the Hmong people. -Long ago a wise, old man lived with a Bear, a Tiger and a Dragon. One day the animals all set out to try to scare one another by seeing who could make the greatest commotion. When the man finally took his turn, he used his brains to teach the others a lesson. He scared the animals so badly that bears, tigers and dragons will no longer live with people. The story is presented with shadow puppets, masks, and live music played on a variety of SE Asian musical instruments.



Coyote Brings Fire to the People- It is told that long ago when the earth was new, the people of California were cold because they did not have fire. They went to Coyote for help and he organized Bear, Mountain Lion, Rabbit, Squirrel, and Frog to help steal fire for the people. Magical Moonshine Theatre presents this native Californian folktale with shadow puppets and music.

Other Productions:



Shipwrecked! The Adventures of Miss Robin Crusoe

In this literature inspired adventure tale, Robin Crusoe (the niece of the famous Robinson Crusoe) is shipwrecked on a deserted island and must survive using her wits.

Armed only with a few washed up parts of her ship and what she can find on the island, she manages to use basic mechanical skills to hoist her ship up from the ocean floor and save herself and her new mischievous monkey friend from the island before the volcano blows or pirates return.

This humorous, edge of the seat adventure story demonstrates the virtues of bravery against all odds as well

as the knowledge of some useful mechanical skills and devices. This is science and literature bound together in a whopping good musical yarn with a surprise ending (not to mention the beautiful textile scenery by California artist Meri Vahl)!

The Recycling Show - Educational and entertaining, this show demonstrates the whys, wheres and hows of recycling using puppets and actors. Done in three parts, the play begins with a puppet skit on garbage and how it can mount up over the years. Part two allows our puppet with the waste problem to go back in time and start over, learning to recycle (with help from the students in the audience). Our “recycologist” and the puppet analyze a bag of garbage, sorting into recyclables, compostables, etc. In the third part of the show the puppet (and audience) get to play the Recycling Game Show where they demonstrate (and reinforce) their knowledge of waste and recycling.



Other School Programs

Puppet Fridays!

Arts Programs and Funding For Your School

With almost 30 years of direct observation of performance trends in California schools it is clear to us that **assembly performances in California elementary schools have dropped dramatically** in the last two years. Many studies have shown that arts exposure in schools increases test scores and develops important neural pathways in the developing child. More important is the quality of life and enrichment that students gain from arts exposure.

There is no question that the economy and school's budgetary difficulties are making it harder for schools to supply this essential aspect of their students education. To this end we are starting a new program to **help bring arts to your school while helping you build community and raise funds for future programs.**

Puppet Fridays! is a program that combines Magical Moonshine assembly programs in the school with an evening fundraising performance to raise money for your school's arts programs. This can be a very successful strategy for building support within your parent/teacher community as well as immediately getting arts into the school. (One very successful example: Magical Moonshine programs have helped Main St. Elementary in Sequel raise funds for assemblies as well as hire a music teacher for the whole year.)

How would it work: While various arrangements are possible, the recommended model would be one of having a double MMTheatre assembly program during school time and then a different program for families that evening as a fundraiser for the school. Magical Moonshine Theatre would waive our usual fee of \$1200.00 for the evening, instead splitting the funds raised with the school in an all-win strategy that pays us something for our evening show and helps the school make money to pay for in-school programs. In addition, refreshment sales, grants, raffles, and program ads can be incorporated to create more community support for school arts programs. This program will, of course, work best with a group of dedicated volunteers from the school to work with MMT to arrange the fund-raising portion of the program, but once in place, this is a model that can be repeated to become a regular part of the school community, raising funds and bringing in artists throughout the year.

For more information on **Puppet Fridays!** and to see how this program could work for your school please contact Magical Moonshine Theatre.



ISS - Inspiring Student Stories

Magical Moonshine Theatre's ISS

-a writing inspiration program for 3-6 graders

Inspiring Student Stories

Note to schools: This program has two levels of participation:

1. Full participation (see full description below) which includes the ISS in class workshops, and consideration of and production of some of your students writings as a Magical Moonshine Theatre ISS Production, to be performed at your school at the culmination of the program.
2. Assembly-only participation- In this version you can have the assembly performance of student stories (from other schools) presented at your school with teachers' materials to encourage and inspire student writings, but this does not include the in class workshops and the consideration of your students writings for production.

What is ISS?

ISS (Inspiring Student Stories) is a writing inspiration program developed by Michael and Valerie Nelson of Magical Moonshine Theatre in conjunction with Chuck Neidhoefer and Julie Herdell (principals of Northwood and Westpark Elementaries of Napa County) with input from teachers and staff. The program's purpose is to encourage creative writing in elementary aged students and provide inspiration, especially for those who may find writing challenging or initially unappealing.

How does ISS work?

While there is flexibility for participating schools, the core program consists of Michael and Valerie meeting with students in their classrooms in a performance/workshop setting to introduce the program and the principles of exciting story writing. Then, over a period of weeks students work with their teachers and on their own to write and then refine their stories. The stories are then read and a number of them are selected based on various criteria to be produced into a Magical Moonshine Theatre production. The program

culminates for the year with a performance by Magical Moonshine of the student works at the participating schools. The exciting possibility of having one's own writing being produced as a puppet play serves as inspiration for student writers.

The ISS Program:

Meeting 1: Michael and Valerie visit classrooms with a 60 minute program that introduces ISS, exciting students about the possibility of having their work produced as a puppet play. Several short oral stories (some with 'missing' elements) and puppet plays introduce story structure in an informative and entertaining way, combining performance with student discussion.

(During the week or weeks following, students begin work on writing their stories. These can be part of the Framework writing curriculum already planned for the year.)

Meeting 2: Michael and Valerie visit classrooms with a 60 minute program on rewriting and refining student stories. Elements of plot, continuity and communicating with your reader/audience are stressed in a performance/discussion format.

(Following meeting 2 rewrites and revisions are completed.)

Stories are collected and the selection process begins. Stories are chosen to be considered for actual production into the puppet play (Michael and Valerie will make final determination.) It will take a month or more for the stories to be adapted to theatre, the puppets and sets to be build and the play rehearsed.

The culmination of the program is the performance (by Magical Moonshine) at your school of the plays written by the students.