

Puppetmongers

Annual Newsletter—Winter 2015



For our Winter Holiday Tradition for **Family Audiences aged 5 to 105**

we are taking our ***Cinderella in Muddy York*** into the cozy

Tarragon Theatre Extraspace. Tell your friends & neighbours!

History and pure fun are integrated in this imaginative retelling of the classic fairy tale. We've reset the story in 1834, just as "Muddy" York is to be renamed Toronto, and Ella is a kind and capable young girl, whose good nature is imposed upon by her new step-family, recently arrived from England with ideas about their own privilege. With a little magic, and some imaginative special effects, she gets herself to the Ball, and to the satisfying conclusion of the story. The play is ingeniously staged with a traditional marionette theatre that transforms, as the story unfolds, into scenes evoking the wilderness, pioneer life and early Canadian society. It is a Cinderella that Canadian children can call their own!

Our version of the *Cinderella* story is told without mice, frogs or birds; no-one breaks into song & dance (well, there are dances at the ball, of course); and Ella and her "prince" are drawn together, not by a pretty dress and hairdo, but by their shared curiosity and excitement about life in this "new" land.

WHERE: Tarragon Theatre Extraspace – 30 Bridgman Avenue (Near Dupont/Bathurst).

WHEN: December 26th to January 1st, daily at 2.30 p.m.

TICKETS: Child/student/senior \$20: Adults \$25: Family 4 pack only \$75: Larger Group Discounts available.

Contact the Tarragon Box Office: 416-531-1827

OTHER UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Puppetry eXploratory Laboratory. Our more-or-less annual PXL will be starting in February, culminating in May with participants' works-in-progress presented at our studio. This program brings together people from all walks of the arts to collaborate on the development of short puppet productions, with our mentorship and guidance. So if you have a puppetry related idea for a project that you'd like to explore and develop with others, or would like to participate in such a project, the **deadline for proposals and applications is January 25th, 2016**.

Contact us at info@puppetmongers.com Or visit <http://puppetmongers.com/puppetry-exploratory-laboratory-pxl/>

School of Puppetry. We have an exciting line-up of workshops planned for the new year at our east end studio. Some are repeats of favourites, some are fresh new ones, and we have more artists joining the roster of workshop leaders. For the schedule and details, visit us at www.torontoschoolofpuppetry.com/

School Touring and Workshops. This year, we have four shows available for school touring:

Foolish Tales for Foolish Times (K to Grade 4) and ***Cinderella in Muddy York*** (Grades 2 to 6),

Contact Prologue at 416-591-9092 / 1-8000-591-2023 info@prologue.org

The Brick Bros. Circus (K to Grade 8) and ***Walidad the Grass Cutter*** (Grade 4 to 8),

Contact Mariposa at 416-462-9400 / 1-888-255-6487 info@mariposaintheschools.ca

SO MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- December 26 to January 1: ***Cinderella in Muddy York***—2:30 matinees at the Tarragon Theatre Extraspace for families, aged 5 and up
- January 25: **PXL proposal deadline** - So jump to it!
- February through May: **School of Puppetry Workshops** at PMT Studio
- February 29 – March 11: **School touring *Brick Bros. Circus***
- March 13: ***Brick Bros. Circus*** at McMichael Art Gallery
- March 28 – April 8: **School touring *Cinderella in Muddy York***
- April 18 – 29: **School touring *Walidad the Grass Cutter***
- May 2 – 13: **School touring *Foolish Tales for Foolish Times***
- June: **Humber College** two week **Puppetry Intensive**



We Gratefully Thank our Board of Directors for their continuing dedication and support: Allie Marshall, Brian Burch, Fran Accinelli, Heather Kent, Larry Swartz, and Linda Rogers. They even covered the cost for us to attend to the Festival Des Casteliers in Montreal last winter!

Also Much Thanks to our funders, the Toronto Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Canada Council, **And to our many generous individual donors:** Ann Gibson, Arthur Powell (our 95 year old dad!), Carlaw Industrial Centre—our studio landlord, Carolyn Lehman, Cornelia Schuh, Ellen Manney, Francesca Accinelli, George Pyron, Halinor Kantor, Joost Pelt, Larry Swartz, Mary Beaty, Mary Truemner, Robert Struthers, Sheila Goulet, Sue Miner, and several anonymous donors, bless them!

Some Highlights of 2015

Last February, the **Brick Bros. Circus** delighted audiences at **Solar Stage**, and as part of the **Puppet Allsorts** series. In the fall, we took the show to The **Midland Cultural Centre** – invited by the newly revived family series committee, several of whom were children the last time we performed there, who now wanted their children to see it!

Your next chance to see the **Brick Bros. Circus** – still in the forefront of the Object Theatre Movement and considered a classic amongst puppeteers – is **March 13th** at the **McMichael Art Gallery** in Kleinberg.

During March Break, we ran children's puppetry workshops at the gorgeous new **Aga Khan Museum**, which gave us the excuse to visit the collections several times while we planned our sessions. We highly recommend the trip to Don Mills to see this marvel, inside and out.

In May, we spent a few weeks with director Mark Cassidy, collaborating on reworking and revising our **Pirate Widow Cheng**. It was most satisfying to put aside the original 2002 script and explore how to tell the Widow's story more succinctly and clearly, with more action and fewer words. To cap the workshoping period, we presented the new developments and discoveries to two evenings worth of invited audiences.

Fresh Ideas in Puppetry Day. This past May's event was the best yet, with each presentation, every performance a highlight of the day and evening! And the move to **Native Earth's lovely Aki Studio** contributed enormously to the ambience and conviviality. See the pictures below. Having not held the Day in 2014, there was a richness of new works and wealth of things-in-the-works to select from for the program – which has led us to decide to run the event every two years: **So keep us posted on exciting puppetry developments for the 2017 event!**



The Puppetry Intensive Course moved back to our studio this past June, when registration for Humber College's Puppetry Intensive was too low for the program to be feasibly run there. A small but keen group of participants joined us and Shawna Reiter (CLUNK Puppet Lab) for 2 weeks of intense puppetry playfulness. The Intensive will be back at Humber this coming June: contact Heather.Kent@humber.ca for more information.

Humber Master Classes. 2015 was the inaugural year of this week of classes in June, a series of 3-day workshops focusing on diverse aspects of puppet theatre, and taught by us 'Mongers as well as by Faye Dupuis (Foreign Landscapes) and Shawna Reiter. It was most satisfying, for us and for the participants, to have the extended time in each session to dig deep into our subject matter.

Artists in the Library Residency. This fall, we've been Artists in the Library with a Toronto Arts Council grant, spending 3 months at Hillcrest PL in North York. Library patrons of almost all ages have been involved in puppetry programs, from pre-schoolers at Saturday Story Time to High Schoolers, After-School 6 to 12 year olds to adults. We also ran Open Door Fridays, as we explored further development of our *'Monger Memories* production about our adventure-filled childhood, and intrigued library patrons dropped in and shared their childhood stories. And we ended the residency with a grand exhibit and performances of participants' creations.

We were once again honoured to be Recommenders for the **Ontario Arts Council's Creators' Reserve** program this year. We look forward to this each season, as it gives us a glimpse of what new puppetry explorations are percolating around Ontario. We received many applications to develop interesting puppet and puppetry related ideas, all asking for a share of our small funding allocation; we wish **Viktorija Kovak** and **Sasha Tate-Howarth** all the best with their projects, and we send our regrets to the other applicants—there's just never enough money to give away.

Please consider giving us your email address, to help save on the rising cost of printing and stamps

Contact us at Puppetmongers Theatre:

Co-artistic Directors Ann Powell and David Powell, Administrator Kim Howe.

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Studio Address: 388 Carlaw Avenue, Unit W-23 (no mail to this address please)

Phone: 416-469-3555 E-mail: info@puppetmongers.com www.puppetmongers.com

Puppetmongers Theatre is a member of the Toronto Theatre Alliance for the performing Arts, UNIMA Canada, The Puppeteers of America, and the Ontario Puppetry Association.

Puppetmongers Theatre is a registered Charity - No. 10434 7042 RR0001 - so give generously!