

Hobey Ford's Golden Rod Puppets

PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS (Teacher Study Guides are available for all performances)



“Animalia”

The quintessential favorite!

Pre-K – 6th grades and Family

Hobey Ford's "Animalia" explores the magical world of animals. This performance features Hobey's original "Foamies" puppets carved from large blocks of foam with intricate mechanical design that gives each puppet realistic movements. Hobey breaks out of the traditional puppet theater booth turning the whole theater into his performance stage. "Animalia" introduces students to the metamorphosis of a butterfly and a tadpole, various ecological systems and endangered animals.

“Migration”

1st- 8th grades and Family

In this sequel to *Animalia*, Hobey Ford returns to the natural world of animals to explore the wonders of migration through the story of a Mexican girl named Beatriz and her own migration to the United States. The story of Beatriz' journey is juxtaposed with the stories of other animals that migrate; Monarch Butterflies, polar bears, the Godwit bird and the Sperm Whale. The puppets in *Migration* are Hobey's original "Foamies," carved foam rod puppets. These extremely realistic puppets are performed behind a thin circular theatrical scrim onto which is projected Hobey's original artwork. The scenes are animated to take the audience along on the journey of these incredible creatures. The puppets appear to be performing within the video projections. Hobey performs this production in full view in his role as storyteller, puppeteer and animator creating a seamless and almost hypnotic dance between the puppeteer, puppets and original artistic scenery. A



gorgeous production with a touching story of hope and change, this is a performance that will thrill your students.



“The Rainbow Bridge and Other Tales”

2010 UNIMA Citation of Excellence

1st – 6th grades and Family

This shadow puppetry production brings to life three folktales through Ford's unique presentational style combining stunning puppetry, storytelling and topical educational themes. Stories include "The Rainbow Bridge," "El Coqui" and "The Three Billy Goats Gruff," with a finale of his Peepers Puppets, and his famous beautifully carved foam animal creatures ("Foamies"). His productions touch on themes across the curriculum with an emphasis on his art form.

The Rainbow Bridge - a Native American folktale of the Chumash, a tribe who inhabited the southern coastal regions of California. The tale recalls the origins of the Chumash on Santa Cruz Island. The people received the gift of fire and with it, the means to develop and flourish until they became overcrowded and

were forced to migrate to the mainland on a rainbow bridge. The tale also tells of the ones who didn't make it across, but fell into the sea becoming dolphins.

El Coqui - a Puerto Rican folktale about how the little tree frog got his song. The animals of the lush rain forest had become lazy on their island paradise until a race was set which forced the animals to get in shape. Little Coqui, being so small, worked extra hard, and his efforts led him to win the race. He was rewarded with his famous song: "coqui coqui, coqui...".

The Three Billy Goats revisits the classic Nordic tale with humor and issues of the day. When the long winter has finally come to an end, The Billy Goats Gruff have exhausted the resources of their meadow and must migrate to the upper meadows. To do this they must cross a bridge where a troll stands guard to prevent their passage. They use the ploy of the original tale by sending the smallest first and begging the troll to let him pass as larger goats will soon be along providing an even bigger meal. From there all goes haywire as little billy goat turns the story on its ear with a surprise ending; for something has gone totally wrong in the environs of the upper pasture and while Big Billy Goat and the Troll are busy fighting it out little Billy Goat sounds the alarm that all is not well and that they should redirect their energies to preserve their world.

“World Tales”

K – 6th grades and Family

A collection of stories and puppetry techniques from around the world including an Aesop fable, a Native American story and an African story. The puppetry techniques include Bunraku from Japan, shadow puppetry from Asia, rod puppetry from Indonesia, and Hobey's own "Foamies" and Peepers puppets.





“Turtle Island Tales”

K – 6th grade and Family

UNIMA Citation of Excellence

Turtle Island Tales is a performance of songs and stories of Native Americans told through puppetry. This production was funded by the Jim Henson Foundation. The production features four tales, “Raven Steals the Sun” (Haida), “The Gift of Fire” (adapted from Semu Haute, a Chumash elder), “Antelope Carrier and the Thunderbirds” (Arikara) and “Little Grandmother Spider Woman” (Cherokee).

“Tales of Light” K- 5th Grades

Master storyteller and puppeteer, Hobey Ford, shines the spotlight on Native American tales teaching about light and life. The native people told numerous stories about fire and the sun to teach not only about light and warmth but to shine a light on many life lessons.

“Little Grandmother Spider Woman”- A Cherokee animal tale from North Carolina about the danger of fire. The story is also about false pride and boastfulness or bragging. Through the story, we also learn about an important craft of the Cherokees: pottery. **“Raven steals the sun”**- This Haida tale tells of Raven the Trickster’s antics in stealing back the sun from a selfish chief who keeps the sun in a box for only himself. **“The Gift of Fire”**- After gifts were given to all creatures but man, hummingbird flies to the sun to bring back a gift for man. Man discovers the uses and dangers of fire in this cautionary tale.



“Tales for the Young”

PreSchool - 1st Grade and Family

A series of short acts and stories perfect for young audiences. The Roving Elf heralds the beginning of the show in classic marionette fashion. The Ant and The Grasshopper puts a modern spin on Aesop’s classic tale. McKoodoo the Storyteller gives his hilarious remedy for bully problems, Chester the Dog entertains with his astounding dog tricks, Little Grandmother Spiderwoman is a poetic tale of the Cherokee, Peepers Puppet will show you how to be a puppeteer with just your bare hands and a set of eyeballs and Ford’s famous Foamies, realistic carved foam animal ballet are the perfect dessert for this set of Tales for the young.

TEACHER WORKSHOPS AND INSTITUTES - Hobey is a teacher in conjunction with the Kennedy Center’s Partnership in Education Program and is listed in their touring directory. Hobey has three teacher workshops that are available for three to four hour sessions.

The Magic of Peeper Puppets: Exploring Story Writing Through Puppetry - Ford believes puppetry is a magical teaching tool that activates students’ creative thinking through play. In this workshop, he introduces participants to his patented Peepers Puppet. Discover how to help your students learn the basics of creating numerous characters using the Peepers Puppet and how to teach your students to write and perform simple scripts, gaining knowledge about basic story structure, story sequence and the power of story in their lives--- by creating theater with just their hands.

From Larvae to Butterfly: Metamorphosis Through Puppetry - using Hobey’s “Foamies” Puppets or shadow puppetry, teachers create a unit to teach metamorphosis through puppetry.

Telling Folktales with Shadow Puppets - Combining storytelling with shadow puppetry brings a variety of cultures to life in the classroom through folktales. During this workshop, teachers become familiar with folktales from many cultures. Participants learn shadow puppetry performance techniques and how to construct their own shadow puppets. Hobey Ford discusses the construction of a shadow puppet theater, scripting a folktale into a play, and organizing a performance with students. Teachers may choose to work with students to develop their own productions or to use the skills and knowledge to deepen the students’ understanding and enjoyment of folktales and literature from the curriculum.

STUDENT WORKSHOPS - Hobey teaches two two hands-on workshops for students 2nd to 8th grades.

Shadow Puppetry - Hobey combines storytelling with shadow puppetry and brings a variety of cultures to life in the classroom through folktales. During this workshop, Hobey will demonstrate shadow puppetry and teach students to make a simple “rod” puppet; basically a character’s body on one or more sticks. Students will become familiar with tales from several different cultures, ultimately choosing one to illustrate with their own easily-made shadowpuppets and learn shadow puppetry performance techniques.

Writing Stories With Peepers - a workshop exploring story development and creative writing using Ford’s patented Peeper puppets.