



The Cobbler, the Bishop, their Prince, and his Madman

"The Cobbler, the Bishop, their Prince, and his Madman" is a collection of unrelated Leo Tolstoy stories that **Doug Berky** has adapted for stage and woven together into a dramatic format. In a kind of time travel collaboration, they, Leo Tolstoy and Doug, imagine together a new story by bringing four of his tales into a shared narrative.

Writing in pre-revolution Russia, Tolstoy was critical of injustices experienced by the people. Much of his criticisms and witticisms were directed at the ruling classes, the government, and the institutional church.

Doug has set these stories in the midst of a war. The Cobbler searches for, and discovers, meaning and hope in a time of chaos and death. A pompous Bishop is humbled and transformed when he finally understands the essence of the faith he represents through his encounter with three bumbling hermits. The Prince, repulsed by his father's penchant for power and violence, sets out on a quest seeking a different way. The Madman, a once ruthless king confronted by a mystic, wanders the desert struggling to understand the true nature of life. "The Cobbler, the Bishop, their Prince, and his Madman" is a journey to the places where despair becomes hope, places where war is defeated by the sowing of compassionate seeds, and places where pompous vanity can be dissolved by healing laughter.