



krannert center

YOUTH SERIES

2019-20

SCHOOL-DAY PERFORMANCES
FOR PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND HOME
SCHOOLS, GRADES PreK-12

— iSANGO ENSEMBLE AESOP'S FABLES





ABOUT ISANGO ENSEMBLE

Isango Ensemble came to life in Cape Town, South Africa, in 2000—the creation of director Mark Dornford-May and co-music director Pauline Malefane who draw artists from surrounding townships to reimagine the Western theatre canon within a South African setting. The company’s structure embraces artists at all stages of their creative development, allowing senior artists to lead and contribute towards the growth of rising talents. At its heart are the extraordinary and varied musical abilities of its group of performers. Isango Ensemble brought Krannert Center audiences joyfully to their feet in 2014, and the company returns to the Center with its vibrant and comedic turn on *Aesop’s Fables*.



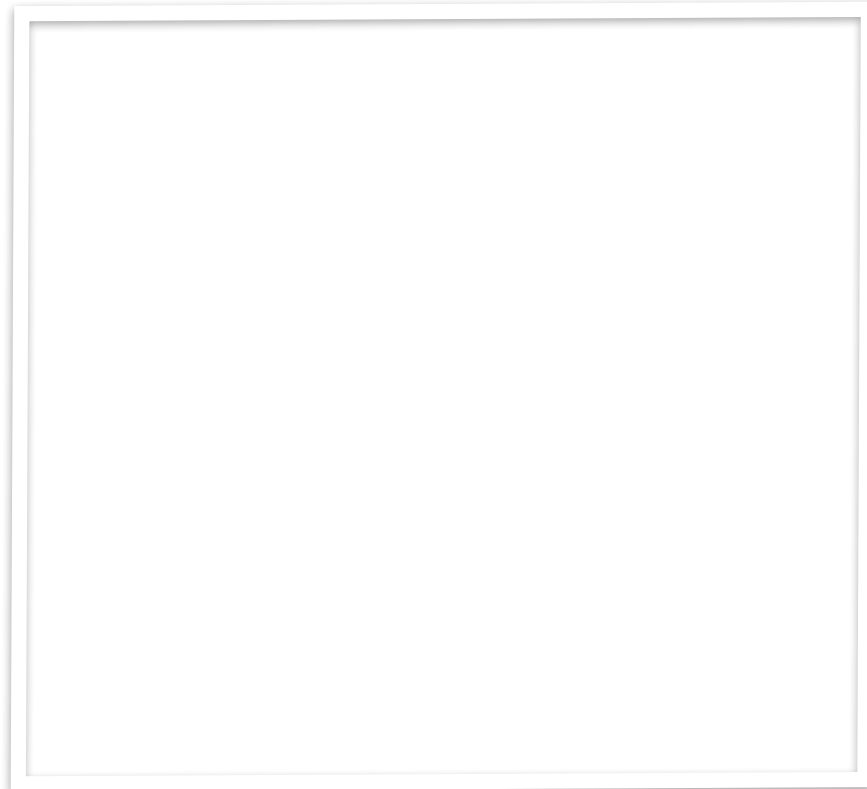
ABOUT THE SHOW

Aesop’s Fables are thought to be over 2,500 years old! They were created by—you guessed it—Aesop, who lived in Greece from 620 to 560 BCE. His stories can be found in ancient texts and are loved for the important life lessons they teach.

Travel with Aesop as he encounters a host of colorful animal characters, such as the tortoise and the hare, and learns the balance of liberty and responsibility. *Aesop’s Fables*, as rewritten by playwright Peter Terson, portrays the ancient Greek story of an enslaved man on a journey to Mount Olympus in a quest for freedom from his master Escallywags. Isango Ensemble’s musical version of this tale is set in the recent history of South Africa and is performed mainly in English with sections in Xhosa, Tswana, and Zulu. Specially composed marimba music by Mandisi Dyantyi adds a new dimension to this contemporary, playfully energetic, and beautifully rendered production. This production includes additional well-known fables, such as the wolf and the stork, the ants who never give up, the frogs who want a king, and the donkey who wants to be a lion.

STORY BOARD

Draw an illustration of your favorite fable from the play—maybe it’s the tortoise and the hare, the wolf and the stork, or another story. Which character feels the most like you? How did you feel while you were watching their story? Why do you think Aesop chose these animals and what was he trying to teach through their fable?



SOUND FAMILIAR?

Many of the fables that Aesop shared sparked sayings that are still in use today. See if you can figure out what word is missing from these familiar phrases:

_____ is only skin deep.

Birds of feather _____ together.

Always _____ before you leap.

_____ and _____ wins the race.

Things are not always what they _____.

Word choices: flock, look, slow, beauty, steady, seem

Credit: Carolina Theatre Study Guides

YOUTH.KRANNERTCENTER.COM

EVERYONE’S A CRITIC

Many newspapers send reporters to cover theatrical presentations like this one by Isango Ensemble. Those reporters are known as “theatre critics,” and while they hopefully don’t go out of their way to actually criticize the artists, they do let their readers know their thoughts about what happened on stage. Now it’s your turn to say what you think! Answer the following questions in your very own “theatre review.”

1. What was special about this production?
2. Did you notice anything interesting about the costumes, music, language, or set design?
3. What was your favorite story, favorite actor, or favorite costume?
4. Was there anything that you liked less about the show?
5. What else should people know before they go to see this show?

FAST AND SLOW

Each student should pick a way to move—skipping, galloping, bear crawling, walking, etc., and lineup on a line with a second line as the destination. When the teacher says go, see what method of movement is most efficient.

1. What story does this remind students of?
2. What method was the fastest? The slowest?
3. What if the distance is closer or further away—does it make a difference?

WHAT IS A TOWNSHIP?

During the late 1940s, the government of South Africa set up a system of apartheid (an Afrikaans word meaning “separateness”). This system of laws enforced the power and privilege of minority whites over black South Africans, the majority population. One of the many ways in which this system discriminated against black South Africans was their forced removal from urban centers to suburban townships. These townships provided few services such as schools, sewer systems, safe housing, or access to transportation. In the 25 years since apartheid was broken down, some progress has been made in improving living conditions in the townships. But for many South Africans, life in the townships remains one of limited access to education, good jobs, and safe living conditions.

ON THE MAP

ISANGO ENSEMBLE IS FROM . . .

CAPE TOWN,
SOUTH AFRICA



Isango Ensemble

Aesop's Fables

Based on the play by Peter Terson
Directed by Mark Dornford-May

Youth Series Performances

Tu-We Oct 1-2, 2019, at 10am
Tryon Festival Theatre
Performance length: 70 minutes
Recommended for grades 1-5

Public Marquee Performance

Tu Oct 1, 2019 at 7pm

*Isango Ensemble appears courtesy of
Columbia Artists Management.*

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LIBRARY CONNECTIONS

Krannert Center has also partnered with Champaign Public Library and The Urbana Free Library to help expand your students' Youth Series experience. Our local libraries have placed materials that relate to *Aesop's Fables* on display, and librarians are prepared to help your students immerse themselves in the wide-ranging subject areas that are covered by the production. These resources will be available approximately two weeks before through two weeks following the performance.

We hope that you are able to take advantage of these exciting partnerships with our local libraries!

www.champaign.org | www.urbanafreelibrary.org