



krannert center

YOUTH SERIES

2019-20

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

TRICK OF THE LIGHT THEATRE: THE BOOKBINDER



I ILLINOIS
College of Fine & Applied Arts



ABOUT TRICK OF THE LIGHT THEATRE

Trick of the Light is a theatre company from Wellington, New Zealand, founded by Hannah Smith and Ralph McCubbin Howell. The two met at Victoria University where they were both studying theatre, and now they create and tour original work around the world. Trick of the Light makes theatre that is playful, inventive, and thought-provoking with shows that range from intelligent children's theatre to biting political satire, but are unified by their attention to narrative, inventive visual design, and belief that theatre should resonate with the wider world. Find out more about the company and their previous shows at www.trickofthelight.co.nz.

SPELL-BINDING STORYTELLING AT ITS PUREST AND BEST

—THEATREVIEW, DUNEDIN

TEACHERS

Head online to *The Bookbinder* event page at youth.krannertcenter.com for the full Trick of the Light study guide with artist interviews, a more detailed look at the production, and discussion questions.

Connects to Illinois Learning Standards in Fine Arts, Social/Emotional Learning, Social Sciences, and Science.

ABOUT THE BOOKBINDER

They say you can get lost in a good book. But it's worse to get lost in a bad one. . . .

And so begins the magically intriguing journey of *The Bookbinder* from New Zealand's award-winning Trick of the Light Theatre. *The Bookbinder* tells the story of a bookbinder's apprentice who cuts corners on the job and finds himself bound in a book. Using paper art, puppetry, and music, this inventive one-person play draws on classic myths and fantasy to weave an original tale.

WHAT IS BOOKBINDING?

Bookbinding is the traditional craft of assembling pages within a cover to form a book. A bookbinder's work can involve both creating new books, and restoring old or damaged books by removing stains, replacing bindings, and mending tears. When they were making *The Bookbinder*, director/designer Hannah Smith and writer/performer Ralph McCubbin Howell interviewed a number of real-life bookbinders, especially Michael O'Brien who works as a traditional hand bookbinder in Oāmaru in the South Island of New Zealand. These interviews have informed the play, and a number of bookbinding terms and sayings can be found within the script:

DEFINITIONS

Gold leaf: Gold that has been hammered into thin sheets and is used to decorate the covers of leather-bound books.

Bone folder: A hand tool made of bone used by bookbinders to fold and crease paper exactly.

Soluble glue: Glue that can be dissolved in water or alcohol.



Photo credit: Michael O'Brien

YOUTH.KRANNERTCENTER.COM



TRANSFORMATIVE STAGING

For Trick of the Light, a theme common to much of their work is an inventive visual design. *The Bookbinder* is staged using various design elements and theatrical techniques. One of these is prop manipulation, or transformative staging. Director Hannah Smith says, "We had a rule when we were rehearsing that the story should be told using objects you might find on a bookbinder's workbench . . . and that each prop should be used at least twice—first as what it was, and then transformed into something else. So scissors become jumping-jack gymnasts, and ink becomes a monster."

DEFINITION

Transformative staging: Individual design elements are used in multiple ways or endowed as different things, allowing the audience's imagination to interpret the different meanings.

ACTIVITY

Find something you can use as a prop and create a short scene that uses it in two ways—first as what it is, and then transformed into something else. How many different ways can you imagine transforming your prop?

AFTER THE SHOW

What other examples of transformative staging did you see in the play? Is all theatre by its very nature transformative?

Content adapted from *The Bookbinder* Study Guide by Trick of the Light Theatre.

ON THE MAP

TRICK OF THE LIGHT
COMES FROM . . .

WELLINGTON,
NEW ZEALAND



Wellington, NZ



Bindery in Oāmaru, NZ

Photo credit: Michael O'Brien



Tussock grass in the South Island
high country.

Trick of the Light Theatre: *The Bookbinder*

Youth Series Performances

Wednesday-Friday November 6-8, 2019, at 10am
and 12:30pm

Studio Theatre

Performance length: 55 minutes

Recommended for grades 3 and up

Public Marquee Performances

Th-Sa Nov 7-9, 2019 at 7:30pm

Sa Nov 9, 2019 at 3pm

*Trick of the Light Theatre appears courtesy of
Boatrocker Entertainment.*

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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 *The Bookbinder* 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

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY: CONSERVATION TREATMENTS AND DECISION MAKING THROUGH THE AGES

Through December 20, 2019. Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

Rare Book and Manuscript Library, room 346 in the UI Main Library

While contemporary conservators strive to apply innovative modern conservation treatments for our objects, we see the good, the bad, and the ugly past repairs through the ages in our collections every day. In this exhibition, we bring together examples—many drawn from our own Rare Book & Manuscript Library—to show the dynamic practice of modern book & paper conservation.

www.library.illinois.edu/rbx

OPEN HOUSE AT THE SPURLOCK MUSEUM OF WORLD CULTURES: NOVEMBER 6-8, 2019, 11AM-2:30PM

Drop in for a self-guided, interactive visit on the day of your Youth Series performance. Museum guides will offer hands-on object studies and gallery-based challenges for students tied to the themes of *The Bookbinder*. The Spurlock Museum also has a variety of resources for classroom use. Contact Kim Sheahan at ksheahan@illinois.edu or 217.244.3355 for information on available artifacts and lesson plans.

