

Starkville Community Theatre Presents

Project P.L.A.Y.

Participation - Learning - Arts for Youth

The Storyteller

Tales from West Africa

Written and Directed by
M.J. Etua



Sponsored in part by a grant from the Mississippi Arts Commission

The Storytellers Tales from West Africa

Prologue: The Storytellers

Na Na.....	Melanie Morse
Storyteller.....	Tiera Bynum
Children.....	Callie Ellis
	Alex Calhoun
	McKenzie Kersen
	Matt Phillips

Turtle and Frog

Turtle.....	Bradley Calhoun
Frog.....	Allison Price
Lion.....	Abigail Cathcart
Ostrich.....	Chelsea Donohoe
Elephant.....	Hannah Spirrison
Rhino.....	Josh Horton
Leopard.....	Sarah Morse
Flamingo.....	Tess Long
Monkey.....	Kelly Truax

Turtle and the Sky Queen

Sky Queen.....	Hannah Horton
Guardians.....	Crystal Phillips
	Tamaria Phillips
Drummer.....	Melanie Morse

Na's Basket

Na.....	Crystal Phillips
Vuan*.....	Hannah Spirrison
Nkobo*.....	Chelsea Donohoe
Vo'olo'o.*.....	Tamaria Phillips
Birds of Paradise.....	Melanie Morse
	Tess Long

The Fortuneteller

Carpenter.....	Josh Horton
Fortuneteller.....	Sarah Morse
Landlady.....	Hannah Horton
Beautiful Daughter.....	Kelly Truax
Villagers.....	Crystal Phillips
	Tamaria Phillips
	Chelsea Donohoe

Epilogue

Glossary:

Ambolo-	Hello
Vuan-	to forget
Nkobo-	to talk
Vo'olo'o-	to listen

Meet the Cast

Hi! I'm Teirra. I would like to dedicate this not to my mom. Mom, you drove me to the store, play practice, cheerleading and dance camp. And I drove you crazy, so now we're even. P.S. I'm the storyteller.

Hi! I'm Alex. I'm one of the kids listening to the storyteller. My first line is, "Look, She's here!" My brother, Bradley is Turtle. My favorite things to do are sing, dance, laugh, and be silly!! I hope you enjoy the show!

I'm Bradley, Turtle. I go to Starkville Christian School and Columbus Community Church. I did play sports, but now I like playing piano, doing puppet shows, and obviously, being in plays. I guess I like entertaining people! So sit back and enjoy the show.

Hi! I'm Abigail. I'm 8 and I have a big part! I play Lion, Queen of the Jungle~ I like to play soccer and run with my big sister, Julia. "whatever"

Chelsea is 13 and a cheerleader at Armstrong. She has performed in many SCT summer productions. "Happiness is like wetting your pants, everyone can see it, but only you can feel the warmth!"

Hi! I'm Callie. I start the play with "I hate the rain!" I love kittens, puppies, dogs and cats. I hope you enjoy the show!

Hey! I'm Hannah, I've been part of SCT's Children's Theater since it began I have both acted and worked backstage. I'm very excited to be acting again! I even get to be in one story with my younger brother, Josh. "I'm a flamingo, I need hydration!"

Hey, I'm Josh. I'm Rhino and the carpenter. I've been in SCT Summer Productions since I was 5. I like to dance, play baseball and certainly, be in plays!!! Just in case you're wondering, "You will become rich...but only if you work hard and save all your earnings!!"

Mckenzie is 6. She graduated from kindergarten in May, and will be homeschooled this fall. She can be shy, but has really enjoyed this production. Her favorite part is the Sky Queen and her guardians. She is a girl scouts and enjoys playing soccer.

My name is Tess and I just turned 9 last month. I play vain Flamingo and sneaky Bird of Paradise. Even though I play two birds, I still like cats!!

Hey! I'm Melanie. Lemons are awesome! I play Na Na and a Bird of Paradise. Ta Ta for now!!

I am Sarah and I play Leopard and the fortuneteller. This is my first play here at SCT. I have found that being in a play is highly enjoyable. Toodies!

Hi! I'm Crystal. I'm 12 and in the 7th grade. I play several people in the play. Na, being one. This is my first play at SCT. I'm in the band at Armstrong and I enjoy softball, gym and dance. "Will someone please listen to me? I'm the 4th of 6 kids!"

Matt's first appearance was in "How to Eat Like a Child". He is one of the kids listening to the Storyteller. He will be in the 4th grade and enjoys playing baseball and flag football. Our favorite quote for Matt is "Be Quiet!"

Tamarie is 14, an 8th grader at Armstrong, where she was in "Guys and Dolls". She is in the band, President of builders club and on the swim team. She loves to act and jumps at every opportunity! "The only place you need to act, is on stage."

Ribbit!! I'm Allison. It's kind of funny that I'm Frog, because I am the smallest person that is an animal. But I don't know how to hop!!!

I'm Hannah! I play wrestler-like Elephant and forgetful Yuan. It has been fun working with all of the people in this production. I don't want to bore you with other things about me, so as Tiger would say, "Ta Ta for now!"

I'm Kelly! I'm 11 and just got finished with my monkey training. I have been raised by Mr. & Mrs. Truax and have one sister in my monkey family. In the play, I am the beautiful daughter and the MONKEY. I would rather be the monkey any day! I have been in many other plays. I would write my favorite quote, but it would have to be in Monkey, and you wouldn't be able to understand eee ooo eee!!!

Meet The Crew

Albert Oppenheimer is an actor pretending to be a techie. He has previously don tech for "Guys and Dolls" at Armstrong, and the recent Thespian Musical Review. "The problem with the Rat Race is that even if you win, you're still a rat" Doonesbury

Courtney Phillips is a graduate of Starkville High School. She plans to attend The University of South Florida to study marine zoology. While at SHS, Courtney was a cheerleader, a dance team member, and performed in every theater performance as a dancer. Her debut at SCE was with "Rapunzel. Her Starkville High shows include "Carrousel, The Boyfriend,, Into The Woods, and The Pajama Game". "blank space?"

Kyle Phillips made his debut in SCT's "Repunzel". At Starkville High, he was involved in "The Pajama Game". He has also been in various church plays since the age of 5. He will be a sophomore this fall and will be the team mascot. "Go Jackets"

Rob Price has acted in several major roles, from a party animal in a Kindergarten play, to the Ghost in the 2002 Summer Scholars production of, "But...it's a Musical!" Rob makes his first appearance as a "Techie" in this performance. "If all the world's a stage, who are the Techies?"

"It's A Jungle in There!"

That's what New Orleans set designer Chad Talkington hopes people will be thinking after viewing Starkville Community Theatre's latest children's play, "The Storyteller: Tales from West Africa" part of Project P.L.A.Y. The play was written and directed by MJ Etua. The set consists of a couple of complex huts, and many other aspects that make this design convey the feeling that you are actually in Africa. Talkington was interested in doing this set because it would help the community he was from and all the children, including his sister, involved with the play. His sister Hannah Spirrison has been involved with Project P.L.A.Y. for the last four years. Hannah remarks "I love Project P.L.A.Y. because it gives me a great thing to do in the summer, and it is always fun. It is especially great how there are so many people that want to be involved." Her friend, Melanie Morse, is also involved with Project P.L.A.Y. and says "Working with the community theater has been a great opportunity for me. MJ is the best director you could ask for - and she makes the play lots of fun to do." Melanie's sister, Sarah Morse, is new to the theatre this year and remarks, "It teaches you what drama really is, while having lots of fun." Talkington a graduate of Starkville High School has been in the theatre business for the past 7 years. He has worked on sets for Le'Petit Theatre located in the French Quarter. Talkington's first original set design was "A Lesson Before Dying" which was nominated for a Big Easy Award.

Note from the Director

The most common advice given by great writer is to write what you know..... Well, I know African folktales. My family is originally from Cameroon, one of the many countries in West Africa. The *Turtle and Frog* was inspired by a tradition Bulu (my ancestral tribe) tale, as was *Na's Basket*. *The Fortuneteller* is a folktale told in many variations all across Africa. *Turtle and Sky Queen* is a product of an oral story created while conducting a storytelling workshop with West Point students involved with the Very Special Arts program in Starkville.

This summer has been a joy because I not only have had an excellent group of actors and techies (who rock!), but also because these stories are very close to my heart. I could not have written for a better group of kids!

Thank you parents, for such beautiful and talented children!

Thanks kids, for being who you are!

Thanks Thomas and techies for all of your hard work!

Thanks Chad, for your genius.

Thank you Donohoes for the fabulous bamboo!

Thanks Stephen, Pattye, and SCT for your constant encouragement and support!

Thanks MAC for supporting the arts!

To my family:

Akeva abui amu beta mvolan wonan w'akeke osu

