

# Study Guide for Vélo Théâtre's

## *There's a Rabbit in the Moon*

By Dana Lambert

Every spring, the Chicago Humanities Festival offers **Stages, Sights, and Sounds**, a mix of the best theater, music, dance, puppetry, and visual art the world has to offer. 2010 features three international companies making their Chicago debuts: Scotland's Visible Fictions, Israel's The Galilee Multicultural Theatre, and France's Vélo Théâtre. Two Chicagoans, Frank Maugeri of Redmoon Theater and beat-boxer/vocal percussionist Yuri Lane, treat us to brand-new work. At the audience's request, we also welcome back Leah Mann and Ela Lamblin, the dynamic duo behind Lelavision, whose stunning physicality and musical sculptures made it the runaway hit of the 2008 festival.

We have prepared study guides for each of the 2010 performances. These materials will help teachers ready their classes for the 2010 **Stages, Sights, and Sounds** and provide activities and ideas to explore with students long after the Festival is over.

### **ABOUT THE CHICAGO HUMANITIES FESTIVAL**

The Chicago Humanities Festival (CHF) creates year-round opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds, and economic circumstances to explore, enjoy, and support the arts and humanities. We accomplish this by presenting programs throughout the year, culminating in two annual Festivals of the Humanities, one in the spring specifically for children and families and one in the fall for the general public. The CHF's mission of providing broad access to the humanities – at a low ticket price – depends in part on the generosity of its most committed and enthusiastic supporters.

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## Lesson Plan:

### *There's a Rabbit in the Moon* Vélo Théâtre

Tiptoe to the hushed and magical world of the night through a secret passage in an armoire. Using everyday objects and your imagination, France's Vélo Théâtre guides you through an enchanting nocturnal tale filled with curious things, fragments of dreams, and fantastic characters. Captivating, funny, and utterly charming, *There's a Rabbit in the Moon* transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary and casts a new light on old nighttime fears.

#### **BIOGRAPHY**

**Vélo Théâtre** was founded by Charlot Lemoine and Tania Castaing in 1981 in Angers, France. The company creates visually-rich performances with few or no words, based on the idea that actors can interpret objects just as they can interpret words and phrases. Emotions are born of the fragile relationship that the actor establishes with the objects he brings to life on stage. The audience is then invited into this intimate relationship.

## STAGES SIGHTS & SOUNDS

#### **CONTENTS**

In this guide you'll find:

- A lesson plan and activities recommended for kindergarten and 1st grade.
- The activities will take: one class session.
- These activities can be used to prepare students for **Vélo Théâtre's** performance or in response to what they see during **Stages, Sights, and Sounds**.

**ACTIVITY: NIGHTTIME RITUALS**

**Purpose:** The night is something everyone experiences. It arrives like clockwork and just as soon as it falls dark it seems the sun is already on the rise again. Ask any child in your classroom what happens when it gets dark and they will give you a list of nighttime rituals (i.e. they brush their teeth, put on the pajamas, read a story, etc) but do they know why it gets dark?

**Students Will:**

- Understand that the Earth rotates around the Sun
- Day/Nighttime is determined by where the Sun is shining
- Where it is nighttime it is day on the other side of the Earth

**Time Frame:** Discussion (20 minutes); Activity (one (1) class period),

**Lesson Plan:**

Begin by asking students the following questions:

- How do we know when it is time to get ready for bed?
- What happens at night?
- How is nighttime different from the day time?
- What gives us daylight?
- What type of activities do you do during the day?
- What activities do you do at night?
- Do all people sleep during the night?
- What might animals do?
- What do you see in the night sky?

**Night & Day**

After the class has shared their answers, ask students why it appears that the sun sets and rises each day. After hearing their answers, explain that they are going simulate day and night on Earth. Be sure that everyone understands the difference between a sunrise and a sunset, night and day, and noon.

Darken the room and turn on a lamp (or flashlight). Explain that the lamp represents the Sun. Next find a student to volunteer to be the Earth. Ask the student to hold a picture of a school. Explain that this picture represents their school. Tell the students to focus on this picture as the Earth rotates.

Have the student begin with his/her back to the lamp (night). Ask students if they think it is day or night at school. Have the student slowly rotate in a counterclockwise fashion, until the light shines on his/her left arm. Ask students if they think it is sunrise or still night.

Instruct the student to continue the counterclockwise rotation until he/she faces the Sun directly. Ask students what time it is at school. Students should be able to see that it is noon, the middle of the day, when we get the most light from the Sun. You may need to prompt students with additional questions to get them to arrive at this conclusion.

Have the student rotate a little more. Have him/her stop when the light is shining on his/her right arm. Ask students what time of day it is. They should be able to tell you that it is sunset.

Complete the day/night cycle by having the student return to his/her original position, with his/her back to the sun. Students should be able to tell you that it is midnight again. Ask students to notice what time of the day it is on the other side of Earth. If the student's back is facing the light that means it is daytime on the other side of the Earth. Explain that one half of the Earth is always light while the other is dark.

Repeat this demonstration by selecting other students to volunteer. Explain that it takes 24 hours for the Earth to rotate completely.

### **EXTENSIONS**

1. Rotate a globe with a sticker on it highlighting your town.
2. Wrap a map around the student with a sticker highlighting your town.
3. Have the class stand in a giant circle, facing each other, holding hands. Hang the word "Chicago" around the neck of one student. Hang the word "China" around the neck of another student across from the student from "Chicago." Explain that the ring of students represents the Earth and you have chosen two students to represent two specific locations on opposite sides of the Earth. Shine the light on the student four or five places right of the "Chicago" student. Ask students what time of day they think it is in "Chicago." Have the ring of students slowly rotate counterclockwise. Ask them to notice how the light is shining on different people (i.e. places) as they rotate. When the light is shining on the student to the right of Chicago, ask them to stop rotating. Ask what time of day it might be in "Chicago" (i.e. sunrise). Ask them what time of day it might be in "China" (i.e. night). Have the group continue to rotate counterclockwise until the light is fully shining on "Chicago." Ask them what time of day it is in "Chicago" (i.e. noon). Continue this pattern until the entire Earth has rotated and it has been sunrise, noon, sunset, and night in both "Chicago" and "China." Have other students wear other location signs around their necks to add in a little more geography.