

FABLES OF LA FONTAINE



PEDAGOGIC DOSSIER

ROCAMORA TEATRE

FABLES OF LA FONTAINE

Adaptation for puppet theatre of the Fables of Jean de La Fontaine:

THE CROW AND THE FOX	Book 1 Fable 2	(LE CORBEAU ET LE RENARD)
THE WOLF AND THE DOG	Book 1 Fable 5	(LE LOUP ET LE CHIEN)
THE FOX AND THE BILLY GOAT	Book 3 Fable 5	(LE RENARD ET LE BOUC)
THE COCK AND THE FOX	Book 2 Fable 15	(LE COQ ET LE RENARD)
THE FOX AND THE STORK	Book 1 Fable 13	(LE RENARD ET LA CIGOGNE)
THE FOX AND THE GRAPES	Book 3 Fable 11	(LE RENARD ET LES RAISINS)
THE CICADA AND THE ANT	Book 1 Fable 1	(LA CIGALE ET LA FOURMI).

With the help of two stagehands of the theater, La Fontaine wants to present and explain these fables. So stagehands perform them with puppets doing what he told them before. But now to help a character, now because does not like a final, they will intervene in the action more than once. In this way the message of every fable is reinforced and worked more extensively.

CREDITS

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Assistant: Susanna Rodríguez
Actors - Puppeteers: Carles Cañellas
Susanna Rodríguez

SYNOPSIS

Two stagehands working for Monsieur de La Fontaine carry a set. They enter inside the puppet theater where Jean de La Fontaine appears, presents himself and explains how he wrote the fables and what they teach. It leads to the first one: The crow and the fox. The theater open and the two stagehands perform the fable with these characters. Just finish, these are quite disgusted by the way was the result and decide on their own, to play again varying the ending, because the poor crow deserves another chance. Thus, the moral will be quite clear.

The second fable presented also by La Fontaine is: The wolf and the dog, which will have an unexpected ending, as when the wolf, being seduced by the promises of the Mastiff, is ready to give up freedom, both stagehands respond vigorously as it deserves, making even the dog changes mind and escape with the wolf. The third fable is called: The fox and the Billy goat. The stagehands should intervene to end when the goat for their ingenuousness, is enclosed within the well where the fox had down him. So help him out and reflect on what has just happened.

The fourth fable is: the rooster and the fox, in which the stagehands act to avoid a disaster. Before the rooster does not fall into the hands of the fox, they make see him the dangerous trick of the fox and encourage him to find ways to escape the fox. The fifth is: The fox and the stork, which has a new intervention of the stagehands, when the stork, feeling cheated by the fox wants to fight with this one. A stagehand advised the stork to pay back the fox in his own coin: to deceive the deceiver.

The fox and the grapes is the next, where stagehands and La Fontaine will laugh of the sudden color change of the grapes. The last Fable: The cicada and the ant will see only the intervention of the stagehands when, in the end, the ant lets unattended the cicada who is dying of hunger and cold. So these and La Fontaine will help the cicada until the spring.

THE TEXT

From the complete works of Fables of Jean de La Fontaine, the author of the show has made the translation and the staging of a selection, removing the role of narrator, so that be the protagonists who, by words or actions to develop, they carry the narrative weight. The text is in verse, to keep the memory of the original work, but with an unorthodox rhyme, that valued above all else, that is to be heard, not read, this means that prevail the musicality of the rhyme, and not its more academic structure. It should be noted that the connection between the seven fables it is done by the own Jean de La Fontaine in puppet version, who comments with the audience, also in verse, their synthesis, adding sayings to emphasize the message or moral.

THE ACTORS

All the players, except the two stagehands are puppets, ten in total. Seven of them representing animals are life-size or even larger. His animation technique is hand puppet, therefore, putting a hand inside the head of the puppet to reach the interior of the mouth, which is mobile, coming straight from the neck or from the body. They are constructed from sculpted volumes of foam mattress, covered with cloth from raw cotton, stitched and colored with acrylic paints applied on paint brush. Two more, the insects, are marionettes of about 40 cm. tall, with diagonal control. And the last, representing Jean de La Fontaine is a rod puppet of half body, 90 cm. high, with moving mouths.

THE SCENOGRAPHY

On a round table of 2.5 meters in diameter are mounted the different sets of the show. This, usually of 70 cm. tall from the ground at the front and 100 in the rear, can change according to the inclination of scenic space, to facilitate the view of the spectators. It has a central hole of 1 m. diameter in which the two puppeteers are moving and a hemispherical canopy that covers a half of the table, serving now backline, now front curtain, according to its position. This is internally coated with fabric blue sky color and externally with made old burlap like the rest of the theater, becoming a sort of globe: (*"...making of this work an ample comedy in a hundred different acts of which the scene is the Universe." The Woodcutter and Mercury - book 5th 1st fable*). Reinforcing this concept, in addition to the stage that defines the table is also used on top of the hood, like a puppet-theater for two appearances of La Fontaine. Also, one of the fables, stripping the front of the theater, we have a new space under the table like the space inside a well. Items props are built or made in clothes or wood of natural finishes, with the intention of giving a rustic ambiance, because all fables are developed in the countryside.

LA FONTAINE AND HIS FABLES

Fables are short stories or narratives, from very oldest times, the communities were transmitted orally from one generation to the other in order to establish moral teachings. He was Aesop (sixth century BC.) who made the first collection. The authors subsequently cultivated this genre have Inspired by their work and he is considered the predecessor.

From him, almost every community will have its fabulist, but we have to wait until La Fontaine (1621-1695), to find an author who, with his genius, makes some recreations that have remained as a model for the later.

It is therefore necessary to see how or what contributions made La Fontaine, and because recognizes him the sense of modernity. In Aesop's Fables, the story itself is a pure vehicle for reaching and teaching morality. Overall these teachings were compiled from the popular wisdom: be satisfied with luck, do not be deceived by deceivers, not blindly rely on others...

La Fontaine is not to do away these teachings it, but passes through the filter of irony and skepticism.

La Fontaine scenarios are very universal; it evokes both the most popular trades, as the world rural and urban.

The powerful, the greedy there are often ridiculed. Another characteristic of his stories is the evocation of nature. In fact, this is a shot in the fashion of the seventeenth century, very sensitive to this.

Finally we should mention the fantasy that La Fontaine uses with his characters. The animals talk and have human behavior, or better yet, the animals served to criticize the shortcomings of manhood. This fantasy is also sweeping logic or science. Do not do anything to fight a fox and a crow for a cheese something quite bizarre if you consider that any two of them do not like cheese. Or the whole fable of the cicada and the ant goes down the drain if we think that the cicada dies before winter. Or claws attributed to the bear... And many other freedoms unscientific, but it does not matter, what La Fontaine want is to use or a characteristic of each specific animal or even evoke their movement.

WORK PROPOSALS

BEFORE YOU WATCH THE SHOW

Comment the synopsis of the show, that they may better understand the meaning of what you will see, omitting details, not to spoil surprises on the day of a performance.

We propose some questions that may be useful to introduce them in various themes:

- What are fables?
(Narration, usually in verse, which through allegorical events and personification of animals and even inanimate beings, is given a moral education).
- Who are the most popular fabulists?
(Aesop, Phaedrus, La Fontaine, ...).
- Who are aimed fables to?
- What sense is taught through fables?
- How to interpret and understand the warning, morality, the board, containing the fables?

AFTER TO SEE THE SHOW

- Try to review with your students the seven fables viewed:
THE CROW AND THE FOX
THE WOLF AND THE DOG
THE FOX AND THE BILLY GOAT
THE COCK AND THE FOX
THE FOX AND THE STORK
THE FOX AND THE GRAPES
THE CICADA AND THE ANT
- Once you have reviewed, we suggest that you speak and ask:
 - What happened in each fable?
 - What kind of person represented each animal?
 - What moral advice or warning contains each?
 - Why the Wolf, even hungry, rejects the proposal of the Dog?
 - What would you say to the Crow and the Billy goat tries to avoid their respective misfortune?
 - How the Rooster is released of the danger?
 - What do the Stork to the Fox?
 - Why the Fox says the grapes are green if everyone seen they are not?
 - What would you do in the place of the Ant and in the place of the Cicada?
- To make the work more interesting, we propose:
 - Represent the fables, with the original text or with your own words.
 - Trying to change the outcome. If necessary, introducing another characters.

**WE HOPE YOU LIKE THE SHOW AND IN THIS DOSSIER YOU CAN
FIND IDEAS FOR TO COULD DEEPEN MORE IN ALL THAT OFFERING.**

Thank you for supporting us and warn us of spelling and grammatical errors pruning be found.

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