MWANA and the turtle’s secret
www.theatrealenvers.ca
PROMOTIONAL KIT

3-8 years
MWANA and the turtle’s secret
PROMOTIONAL KIT

Table of contents
Mwana and the turtle’s secret.................................................................................................................................3
Cast ........................................................................................................................................................................4
Technical sheet ..................................................................................................................................................5
Stage plan .........................................................................................................................................................6

Annex
Shadow theatre and hand-made Tom-Toms workshop .......................................................................................7
Recent touring activity .........................................................................................................................................8
Comments .....................................................................................................................................................9
Press release ..................................................................................................................................................9
Letters of support ..........................................................................................................................................10

Information
Théâtre À l’Envers
5350, Lafond street
Montréal (Québec)
H1X 2X2
info@theatrealenvers.ca
www.theatrealenvers.ca
+1.514.544.9370

Patricia Bergeron
General and artistic director
+1.514.544.9370
diffusion@theatrealenvers.ca

Audrey-Maude Blais-Gallant
Communications and booking agent
+1.514.912.5131
diffusion@theatrealenvers.ca

Photos: Michel Pinault and Isabelle Stephen
MWANA and the turtle’s secret

Play summary

Spun from an African tale, this is the beautiful story of a courageous young girl named “Mwana” who lives in a village deep in the forest. Every day, a giant monster comes and steals the villagers’ food. When Mwana proposes confronting the giant, the Village Chief wonders how such a little girl could defeat a monster that no one has ever been able to stop. Is there a secret that only Mwana knows? The play takes the audience on a theatrical journey of courage, love and friendship as it explores the French proverb “We often need someone smaller than ourselves”. The story is told by Canadian and Congolese performers and uses a range of theatrical art forms, including puppets, shadow theatre and object theatre.

Genesis of the show

In the course of 2015, Théâtre À l’Envers was fortunate to host a Congolese puppeteer artist, Patience Bonheur Fayulu Mupolonga, with the help of a grant from the Council of the arts of Montreal as part of the Dem’Art-Montréal program. It is from the desire to create an African tale in puppets and shadow theatre for the early childhood audience that the project was born.

Research was first carried out on the African tales with this artist to determine which would have the most scenic potential to address the toddlers. At the end of this first stage of work, it is the traditional African tale entitled “Satongé - Bia” which was chosen because it allows to pay homage to the child by showing that even the smallest children can show courage and cunning when it comes time to save others.

Théâtre À l’Envers has decided to continue its collaboration with Congolese artist Patience Bonheur Fayulu Mupolonga and co-produce the play with La Place des Arts in Montreal to dramatize this story into a show with a small scenic device, which can be technically autonomous, while promoting a close relationship with the public, like African storytellers. Faithful to its mission of mixing artistic forms and the mixing of people, Théâtre À l’Envers has surrounded itself with a team of creative artists from different artistic and cultural backgrounds (illustration, shadow theater, puppets, music) Congo, Algeria, Peru, Quebec) to create a rich and varied show in its presentation through shadow theater, object theater, puppetry, clowning and storytelling.

Highlights

Théâtre À l’Envers is the recipient of the Prix Alliances RADARTS-RIDEAU.

Mwana and the turtle’s secret was supported by a residency with Place des Arts (Montreal, Quebec) in 2017.

The show was presented at the Festival Petits Bonheurs Montreal, Laval and Abitibi during the 2017-2018 season.

Since its creation, the show was performed more than 110 times on tour (2017-2019).

The show was programmed in the Conseil des Arts de Montréal on tour (2018-2019) for 24 representations.

The production was presented on tour in 18 schools in Ontario and 2 schools in Quebec (2018-2019).

The show was performed 5 times in English at the Wee Festival of Toronto – Arts and culture for Early Years (May 2019).

The show was subsidized by Art Council of Canada and Conseil des Arts et des Lettre du Québec.
Cast

Patricia Bergeron
Artistic and Managing Director

A stage director, actor, puppeteer and author, Patricia Bergeron completed an acting degree in 1998 at l’École supérieure de théâtre of the University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM). She has been in several professional productions in Canada and abroad, namely with Carbone 14, L’Illusion (puppet theatre), Théâtre de la Dame de Coeur and Théâtre Sans Frontières (in England). She has participated in mask theatre, puppetry and dance workshops, in France, Italy and Canada. Over the last fifteen years, she has directed many theatre shows. She wrote and directed Woanda and Mwana and the turtle’s secret produced by Théâtre À l’Envers. She has more than 20 years of experience in facilitating workshops on puppetry, mask and shadow theatre for children and adults. Patricia is very involved in cultural mediation and was an artist-mediator at TOHU in Montreal during three years. She also coordinated the Prélude program set up by the Conseil des Arts de Montréal, Cirque du Soleil and TOHU. She has completed a Masters Program in theatre at UQAM, which mainly focuses on the combination of dance and contemporary puppetry.

Robine Epanda Kaseka Kia
Actress

A self-taught actress, Robine participated in the Ateliers ouverts à la diversité of the Théâtre du Nouveau Monde and was a mentee at the Black Theater Workshop. She was also a candidate for the Auditions de la diversité.

She was part of the Théâtre Motus’ Baobab cast, touring in 2018 and 2019.

Robine also dances for the Afro-Colombian dance crew Tribu Kumbé who presented shows at Nuits d’Afrique, Weekends du Monde, Présence Autochtone, etc.

In 2019, she is a director and actress with Uptown Crew and the play Le Venin de Jocaste, presented at Revolution They Wrote Festival and Montreal Fringe Festival. The group received the most promising local French company award. She played with New York Yonder Window Theater company as Helena in The Dream Project 3.0, an adapted version of Shakespeare’s Midsummer Night’s Dream (Fall 2019). She was cast as Gloria in Lucy Kirkwood’s It Felt Empty when the Heart Went at Last but it is Alright Now presented at the National Theatre School of Canada (Fall 2019).

Creative Team

Ideator: Patricia Bergeron, Patience Bonheur Fayulu Mupolonga, Marie-Ève Lefebvre and Steve Beshwaty
Text and adaptation: Patricia Bergeron in collaboration with Patience Bonheur Fayulu Mupolonga
Director: Patricia Bergeron
Assistant director: Marie-Ève Lefebvre
Performers: Patience Bonheur Fayulu Mupolonga or Robine Epanda Kia Kaseka and Patricia Bergeron
Set and costume designer: Fanny Bisaillon Gendron
Illustrations, visuals and mask: Steve Beshwaty
Puppets and mask: Salim Hammad
Shadow theatre: Marie-Ève Lefebvre
Lighting: Mathieu Marcil
Music: Dumiszwe Vuyo Bhembe
Technical sheet

About the show

It is an autonomous show where sound and lighting are handled by both performers. The show turns therefore without a director.

Stage dimensions:

Stage dimensions: 5.50 m width x 4.88 m depth x 2.44 m height (18’ width x 16’ depth x 8’ height). Allow a minimum of 4-5 feet between the stage and the first row of spectators on the ground.

Target audience: 3 to 8 years old (families) and 4 to 8 years old (school groups)

Performance length: 45 minutes

Max capacity: 150 to 250 spectators

Set-up: 3 hours before the show with the help of a technician to unload the transport vehicle and set up the sound system, the set and the lighting.

Strike: 1h30

Staff on tour: 2 performers

Type of show: Play with storyteller/puppeteers, shadows, objects and puppets

Type of rooms: This show is designed for small and medium size areas, but also community halls, schools and non-traditional

Video links

Trailer: https://vimeo.com/477997968
Full-length show in English: https://vimeo.com/343309420
Password: TAEMwana

Material and technical needs

Sound:

- in case of a performance in an equipped space, the TAE uses loudspeakers that are connected to its own mixer backstage. The sound is controlled by the performers using cue-lab. A sound technician is required to set the sound balance;

- in case of a performance in a non-equipped area (schools, community halls, etc.), the company may provide speakers for an additional-charge (rental). Please notify the company if this is the case;

Lighting:

- 2 accessible and separate electrical outlets;
- very low light in order to see the shadows;
- if spotlights are available in the theatre, the lighting could be enhanced by adding 4 white lamps and 4 blue lamps in FOH;
- note that FOH lights can be controlled by a technician or controlled by the lighting board operated by the performers on stage.

Background:

- 1 black curtain for the back stage (approximately 20 ft or 6 m and 12ft or 3.7 m);
- 2 black curtains for the sides.

Weight and volume of design set and accessories:

Weight: 143 kg
Volume: 1,12 m X 1,1 m X 2,3 m = 2,83 m³
Stage Plan

- Black curtains in background
- Table with light and sound mixer
- Shadow theatre table
- Self-supporting structure with screen
- Spotlight on tripod
- Spotlight on tripod part of the set
- LED Fluorescent tube
- 4' of space between the stage and spectators
Shadow theater workshop

The shadow theater workshop aims to familiarize the child with the work of light and shadows through various play games where everyone is invited to participate. A second part can be added to create and present a theater play.

The workshop is offered in two versions (short or long) in one or two periods of activity (depending on the choice of the teacher):

First part: (1 h): introduction to shadows - Bodily
Second part: (2 hrs) (optional): creation of a short shadow play with silhouettes.
Target audience: from pre-kindergarten to sixth grade of primary.
Number of participants: one class students at a time (approximately 18 to 25 participants).
Cost of the workshop: Contact Théâtre À l’Envers for further details.

Théâtre À l’Envers offers introductory shadow theater workshops. It is also possible to finance this activity through the Culture à l’École program.

See the link below for more informations:
https://cultureeducation.mcc.gouv.qc.ca/repertoire/30382 (Artist: Patricia Bergeron)
and http://www.theatrealenvers.ca/TAE/ateliers/

Hand-made Tom-Toms workshop

Hand-made percussion workshop:
(1:45 h) (introduction to percussions and creation of a handmade tom-tom)

Contact:
Audrey-Maude Blais-Gallant
Communications and booking agent
+ 1.514.912.5131
diffusion@theatrealenvers.ca

Patricia Bergeron
General and artistic director
+ 1.514.544.9370
diffusion@theatrealenvers.ca
## Recent touring activity

### MWANA and the turtle’s secret

#### SEASON 2019 - 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saint-Jérome</td>
<td>Théâtre Gilles-Vigneault</td>
<td>April 12-13, 2021 (2 shows)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sainte-Marie-de-Beauce</td>
<td>Ovascène</td>
<td>April 15, 2020 (2 shows)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint-Bruno</td>
<td>Centre Marcel-Dulude</td>
<td>February 23, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorval</td>
<td>Centre culturel Peter B.Yeomans</td>
<td>November 10, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaudreuil-Dorion</td>
<td>Centre multifonctionnel Francine-Gadbois</td>
<td>September 29, 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SEASON 2018 - 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>Wee Festival</td>
<td>May 17 - 19, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lévis</td>
<td>L'Anglicane</td>
<td>May 14 - 15, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Bic</td>
<td>Théâtre du Bic</td>
<td>May 4 - 5, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sainte-Geneviève</td>
<td>Salle Pauline-Julien</td>
<td>April 29 - May 2, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westmount</td>
<td>Victoria Hall</td>
<td>April 27, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>École Élémentaire Catholique Notre-Dame-de-Grâce</td>
<td>April 26, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississauga</td>
<td>École Élémentaire Catholique Ange-Gabriel</td>
<td>April 25, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>École Élémentaire Gabrielle-Roy</td>
<td>April 24, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>École Élémentaire Catholique du Bon-Berger</td>
<td>April 23, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lasalle</td>
<td>Théâtre du Grand Sault</td>
<td>April 14, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepean</td>
<td>Ecole Laurier-Carrière</td>
<td>April 12, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>Ecole Terre-des-Jeunes</td>
<td>April 11, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarborough</td>
<td>Ecole Laure-Riese</td>
<td>April 10, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>Ecole Jeanne-Lajoie</td>
<td>April 9, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>Ecole Élémentaire Mathieu-da-Costa</td>
<td>April 8, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Mayson de la Culture Marie-Uguay</td>
<td>March 29 - 31, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Mayson de la Culture Mercier (L’école et les arts)</td>
<td>19 shows from March 18 to 27, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boucherville</td>
<td>Centre multifonctionnel Francine-Gadbois</td>
<td>March 13, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Maison de la Culture Ahuntsic</td>
<td>March 7, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue</td>
<td>Centre Harpell</td>
<td>March 4 - 9, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitby</td>
<td>Ecole Élémentaire Catholique Jean-Paul II</td>
<td>March 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississauga</td>
<td>Ecole Élémentaire Catholique Saint-Jean-Baptiste</td>
<td>February 28, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakville</td>
<td>Ecole Élémentaire Catholique Sainte-Marie</td>
<td>February 27, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton</td>
<td>Ecole Élémentaire Catholique Saint-Nicolas</td>
<td>February 26, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>Alliance Française</td>
<td>February 24 - 25, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>Ecole Élémentaire Pierre-Elliot-Trudeau</td>
<td>February 22, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatineau</td>
<td>La Basoche</td>
<td>February 18-21, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maniwaki</td>
<td>Maison de la Culture de la Vallée de la Gatineau</td>
<td>February 16, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>Ecole Élémentaire Catholique Sainte-Geneviève</td>
<td>February 15, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Montréal-Nord</td>
<td>February 10, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Bibliothèque de Saint-Léonard</td>
<td>February 9, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pointe-Claire</td>
<td>Centre culturel de la ville de Pointe-Claire</td>
<td>February 3, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint-Constant</td>
<td>Musée ferroviaire canadien</td>
<td>February 2, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Maison de la Culture Pierrefonds</td>
<td>February 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrebonne</td>
<td>Théâtre du Vieux-Terrebonne</td>
<td>January 21-22, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Rosemont</td>
<td>January 20, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Maison de la Culture de Verdun Quai 5160</td>
<td>December 8, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Service des loisirs de Saint-Laurent</td>
<td>November 20, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Maison de la Culture Maysonneuve</td>
<td>November 18, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anjou</td>
<td>Centre Communautaire</td>
<td>November 9 -10, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lachine</td>
<td>Entrepôt / Complexe culturel Guy Descary</td>
<td>November 4, 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comments

What did the students like most about the show?

Kindergarten and 1st year students in French learning classes:

- “I loved when the lion came to stop the monster” - Abeera, age 5
- “I liked the monster because he was so cool” - Marcus, age 5
- “I liked Mwana, the turtle and the two comedians” - Sumeet, age 6
- “I liked the music in the show” - Waleed, age 5
- “I loved the turtle and when Mwana gave a mangosteen to the monster” - Akshaya, age 5
- “I liked when the comedian put the frame around his face” - Alejandra, age 6

Press release

Article written by Jean-François St-Arnault following the presentation of Mwana and the turtle’s secret at the Wee Festival in Toronto in May 2019. Web site: http://www.montheatre.qc.ca/espace/toronto-a-la-rencontre-de-lau-theatre-pour-la-tres-petite-enfance-au-wee-festival/
Lévis, le 31 mai 2019

Monsieur Alexandre Numes
Adjoint à la direction
Théâtre À l’Envers
5350, rue Lafond,
Montréal QC  H1X 2X2

Objet: Lettre d’appui – Mwana et le secret de la tortue

Monsieur Numes,

Il nous fait plaisir de vous signifier notre appréciation du spectacle *Mwana et le secret de la tortue* du Théâtre à L’Envers que nous avons présenté à des enfants âgés de 3 à 6 ans à L’Anglicane les 14 et 15 mai 2019 pour un total de 3 représentations.

L’amalgame du théâtre d’ombre et d’objets avec le conte africain apportait du dynamisme et des éléments de surprise au spectacle. L’interaction suscitée par les interprètes avec le public a aussi été appréciée par les enfants visés par cette proposition.

Nous étions heureux d’intégrer ce spectacle dans la programmation jeunesse 2018-2019 à L’Anglicane et de pouvoir le présenter dans une configuration au sol idéale pour les petits enfants qui sont assis par terre sur des coussins à proximité de l’aire de jeu.

Espérant le tout à votre satisfaction, nous vous prions de recevoir nos meilleures salutations.

Mireille Pouliot
Coordonnatrice aux arts de la scène
Diffusion culturelle de Lévis
Objet : Lettre de référence pour *Mwana et le secret de la tortue*

Madame Bergeron,

La TOHU, en tant que membre du Réseau Petits bonheurs, a eu la chance de diffuser deux (2) représentations du spectacle *Mwana et le secret de la tortue* en mai 2017 et cela a été un vif succès. Ce nouveau spectacle du Théâtre À l’Envers sait très bien s’adapter à différents lieux, l’équipe est excessivement agréable et le spectacle d’une grande qualité. En effet, les des deux représentations (qui affichaient complet) ont trouvé preneur très rapidement en plus de charmer les petits et les grands. Le spectacle a eu lieu en formule hors les murs à la Maison d’Haïti dans le cadre de la 13ᵉ édition du Festival Petits bonheurs, le rendez-vous culturel des tout-petits. Le spectacle raconte une histoire drôle et touchante grâce au théâtre d’ombres, de marionnettes et de théâtre d’objets. Cette proposition de spectacle peut très bien faire l’objet d’une médiation culturelle en amont après la représentation.

La TOHU n’hésitera pas à programmer à nouveau ce charmant spectacle et à en parler positivement auprès de d’autres diffuseurs. C’est un spectacle qui a un très bon potentiel de tournée dans les salles de diffusion, les salles multifonctionnelles ou les centres communautaires. Nous vous souhaitons beaucoup de succès pour la suite de *Mwana et le secret de la tortue*.

Veuillez agréer, madame Bergeron, mes meilleures salutations.

Cordialement,

Stéphane Lavoie
Directeur général et de la programmation