



Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia

Autumn 2007

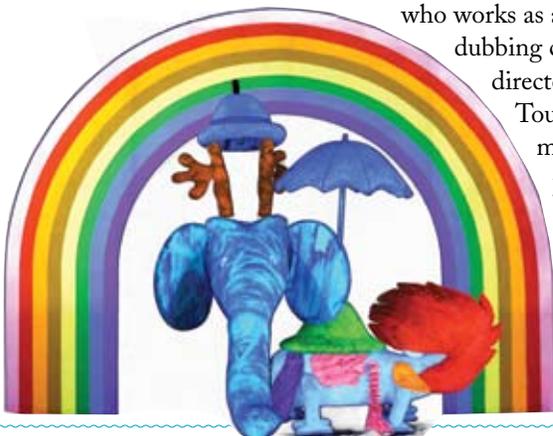


LA ORUGA MUY HUMBRIENTA HEADS FOR MEXICO

Mermaid Theatre's ongoing collaboration with renowned author Eric Carle has moved into its eighth year and its fourth language. A "mix and match" grouping of tales (all headlined by *THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR*) continues to rack up impressive statistics, having delighted more than a million spectators on three continents. In addition to many North American repeat performances, the Carle adaptations have toured throughout Japan on eight different occasions and visited Singapore twice.

During November 2007, *LA ORUGA MUY HAMBRIENTA Y OTROS FAVORITOS DE ERIC CARLE* (including *NUBECITA* and *EL CAMALEÓN CAMALEÓNICO*) will head for Monterrey, Mexico. The company will present twelve performances at the UNESCO-sponsored event called the Universal Forum of Cultures -Monterrey 2007. The key themes will be cultural diversity, sustainability, peace and knowledge, with a broad spectrum of activities intended to encourage an active interchange between the public and artists, intellectuals, political leaders, scientists, economists, and experts in environmental protection from every region of Mexico. More than 1.5 million visitors are expected.

The production is directed by Jim Morrow, Mermaid's Artistic Director, with the soundscape created by Steven Naylor, the company's principal composer. The translation of Eric Carle's evocative collages has been achieved by a superb production team led by Jim Morrow. Narration for the English-language stories is the work of Gordon Pinsent, who ranks among Canada's most respected artists. The Spanish-language version features the voice of Marco Ledezma, a Mexican-born artist who works as a performer, dubbing consultant, and director in Montreal. Touring company members include performers John Allen MacLean and Mary Ellen Maclean, and stage manager Lisa Cochran.



After a brief holiday hiatus, Mermaid will tour from January through June 2008, offering both English and Spanish-language performances in Ontario and in seventeen American states.



Seen left to right. front row: Vernon Snair, Jen Wende, Sara Lee Lewis, Jim Morrow, Brennan Caverhill. Rear row: Catherine Crocker, Struan Robertson.

ALIAANT SUPPORTS CODE GREEN

Mermaid's staff was pleased to welcome Vernon Snair, Regional Manager for ALIAANT, on stage at the Mermaid Imperial Performing Arts Centre on Monday, April 30th, 2007. The occasion marked the opening presentation of the Mermaid Institute of Puppetry Arts' unique environmental production, *CODE GREEN - ENHANCING AWARENESS OF SPECIES AT RISK*. Generous assistance from ALIAANT in the amount of \$10,000 enabled the company of four to present 45 performances for 4400 spectators in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick throughout the month of May. In addition to school visits in several counties and nine shows at the Imperial, *CODE GREEN* was featured at fifteen public performances at the New Brunswick Museum in Saint John, the Natural History Museum in Halifax, and at the prestigious International Science and Management of Protected Areas Conference (SAMPAA) at Acadia University in Wolfville, NS.



MERMAID TO PRODUCE GOODNIGHT MOON & THE RUNAWAY BUNNY

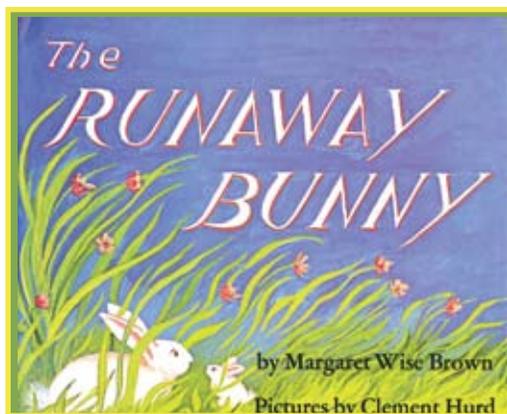
Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia will add to its acclaimed repertory of outstanding children's productions with an innovative double bill adaptation of Margaret Wise Brown and Clement Hurd's beloved bedtime classics, *GOODNIGHT MOON* and *THE RUNAWAY BUNNY*. Preliminary touring is anticipated for the late Fall of 2008.

Now in its thirty-fifth season, Mermaid Theatre has earned international acclaim for its unique interpretations of the works of Eric Carle (*THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR*), Leo Lionni (*SWIMMY, FREDERICK & INCH BY INCH*) and Sam McBratney (*GUESS HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU*). These widely-travelled productions incorporate innovative puppetry, striking scenic effects, and evocative original music to provide very young audiences with an effortless introduction to the performing arts and the excitement of reading. The new show will feature these same elements.

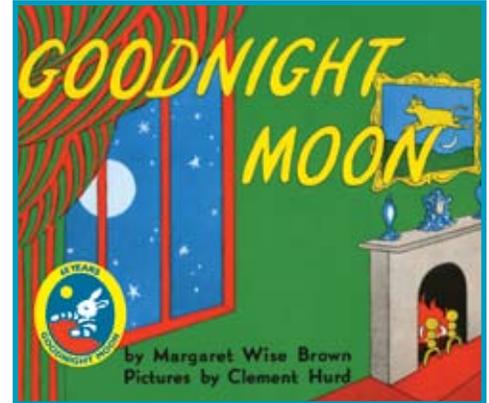
Few writers have been as attuned to the concerns and emotions of childhood as Margaret Wise Brown (1910–1952). Brown, a former teacher, believed that very young children could be fascinated by the simple pleasures of the world around them. Few had previously attempted to write specifically for children aged two to five, and Brown created some of the most enduring and beloved children's books of all time as well as developed the concept of the first durable board book.

Clement Hurd (1908–1988) graduated from Yale University and studied painting in Paris in the 1930s with Fernand Léger and others. His engaging semi-abstract style became world-famous with the publication in 1942 of *THE RUNAWAY BUNNY* and *GOODNIGHT MOON* in 1947 - collaborations with Brown that became two of the 20th Century's best-known children's books.

GOODNIGHT MOON is a celebration of familiar nighttime rituals, while *THE RUNAWAY BUNNY*'s pretend tale of leaving home evokes reassuring responses from his loving mum. Both tales feature endearing rabbit characters, and the soothing rhythms of bunny banter and dream-like imagery never fail to infuse young readers with a reassuring sense of security. Mermaid's staged adaptation will bring a new sense of appreciation to stories that have delighted several generations.



Jim Morrow, Mermaid's Artistic Director, will direct the new production and serve as Production Designer. Steven Naylor, Mermaid's Artistic Consultant for Music and Sound Design, will create the soundscape. Kids' Entertainment of Toronto will undertake national and international booking arrangements.



Goodnight Moon © 1947 by Harper & Row. Text ©renewed 1975 by Roberta Brown Rauch. Illustrations © renewed 1975 by Edith Hurd. Clement Hurd, John Thatcher Hurd and George Hellyer, as Trustees of the Edith & Clement Hurd 1982 Trust. *The Runaway Bunny* © 1942 by Harper & Row. Text copyright renewed 1970 by Roberta Brown Rauch. Illustrations ©1972 by Edith Hurd. Clement Hurd, John Thatcher Hurd and George Hellyer, as Trustees of the Edith & Clement Hurd 1982 Trust.

NEW HORIZONS FOR MERMAID YOUTHEATRE

Now in its 17th season, Mermaid's dynamic Youtheatre continues to explore the challenges of the contemporary adolescent scene. The Youtheatre's teenage outreach program, known as The Circle, is currently developing a new play for junior high school audiences entitled *THE FIT*. It's about Michael, a 14-year-old who is increasingly unable to fit into family or community life. The script mirrors the forces that push and pull Michael, and will be told with directness, humour, and reflection.

The project stems from an effort to understand community response to current teen issues. Accordingly the Youtheatre is collaborating with the Suicide Prevention Working Group of Nova Scotia's South Shore Safe Communities initiative. Michael's dilemma resonates for many young people, and it is anticipated that his story will elicit questions from Grade Nine audiences as the play, a pilot project, tours to Lunenburg County schools during the Fall of 2007. Following each performance, these queries will become the focus of guided audience debriefings with qualified professionals.

Also during the Autumn of 2007, Youtheatre director Chris Heide will embark on a further new adventure as he takes the Mermaid Youtheatre's outreach work to Pangnirtung. While in residence in Nunavut, he'll seek to engage Inuit teens in the creation of theatre that reflects teenage concerns in the Far North.

FURTHER EXTENSIVE TOURING FOR LIONNI PRODUCTION

Mermaid Theatre's whimsical adaptation of Leo Lionni's *SWIMMY, FREDERICK & INCH BY INCH* will return to US and Canadian centres in the Fall of 2007, following an extensive initial tour which delighted close to 120,000 spectators. Following mid-September launch dates at the Dalhousie Arts Centre in Halifax and the Ship's Company Theatre in Parrsboro, NS, the show will be seen in fifteen states, and conclude with twelve performances in late December at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC.

Following his immigration to the USA from Holland in 1939, Leo Lionni embarked on a highly successful career in the fields of both graphic and fine art. He subsequently earned worldwide popularity as the author and illustrator of more than thirty children's books, many of them translated into numerous languages. Among other honors, Leo Lionni was a four-time winner of the prestigious Caldecott Honor Book award. He died in Tuscany in 1999 at the age of 89, leaving a remarkable legacy for future generations.

Leo Lionni's exquisite collage works are ideally suited to Mermaid's unique approach to stage adaptation. The three Caldecott Honor books Mermaid has chosen are strikingly beautiful, and their texts are whimsical yet wistful. *Swimmy* is a tiny insignificant fish in the vast ocean who uses ingenuity to fend off danger. *Frederick*, a poetic mouse, makes everyday life an artful experience. A lovable inchworm displays his facility for measuring absolutely everything. All these creatures provide wonderful scope for translation to puppet theatre through the gentle storytelling style which has brought international recognition to Mermaid Theatre.



Mermaid's adaptation has been directed and designed by Jim Morrow, while the evocative soundscape is the work of composer Steven Naylor. Company members include performers Suzy Crocker, Jesse MacLean, and stage manager Skye Perry.

ANIMOTION 2 –

Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia's training wing, the Institute of Puppetry Arts, launched its first intensive workshop for professionals in 2006. The four-week intensive program, presented annually, is intended for those with a strong interest in puppetry and physical theatre and the desire to expand their range of abilities. The most recent session, held throughout the month of August 2007, exposed six participants to a wide range of puppetry styles, broadening their frame of reference and allowing a common language and set of skills to emerge. Classes terminated with the presentation of scenes and vignettes, featuring new puppets and characters generated over the four weeks. Training took place at Mermaid's spacious headquarters in Windsor, NS.

(left to right)
Jackie Pijper,
Emma Slipp,
Moni Wildemann



MERMAID'S JAPANESE GUESTS

Mermaid Theatre was delighted to host representatives from Japan's Kodomo Gekijo National Center during the Spring of 2007. The unique non-profit association is dedicated to the cultural enrichment of young people, particularly those who live outside major urban centres. The Center's membership includes children, teachers, and parents who belong to 600 independent regional organizations in 47 prefectures of Japan. Objectives are achieved through the presentation of stage performances by national and international artists of high caliber. To date, Mermaid Theatre has presented one hundred Japanese-language performances of its adaptations of Eric Carle stories for close to 57,000 spectators under the auspices of Kodomo Gekijo. An eighth tour is anticipated for March 2008. Following a preview performance of *GUESS HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU* at Mermaid's headquarters, the Kodomo Gekijo delegation flew to Costa Mesa, California to see *SWIMMY, FREDERICK & INCH BY INCH*.

(left to right)
Hiroe Takeuchi,
Fusae Fukada,
Andrew Kirk
(Deputy Mayor,
Town of Windsor,
NS), Takako Aoki,
Shoji Takahira -
April 11th, 2007



ACTIVE USE FOR MERMAID IMPERIAL PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

After more than three decades of touring award-winning productions around the globe, Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia has found a wonderful berth for its hometown performances. Renovation work is well underway at the Mermaid Imperial Performing Arts Centre in downtown Windsor, NS. The complex includes a 400-seat auditorium, a 60-seat intimate "second stage" venue called The Mermaid Loft, and a reception room.

While electrical work and lobby renovations have not yet been completed, the facilities are already much in demand. In addition to full-scale presentations in the main hall (including preview and homecoming performances of Mermaid shows), the Loft has enjoyed a busy summer with a variety of workshops, coffeehouse-style concerts, informal readings and Mermaid Youtheatre presentations.

Restorations have been facilitated with assistance from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development, the Department of Cultural Heritage, and private and corporate donors who are participating in an ongoing "seat sale". Mermaid Theatre has itself invested \$250,000 in the project, and is currently seeking an additional \$150,000 to finance lobby and auditorium furnishings as well as to complete the installation of lighting and sound equipment.

MAJOR SUPPORTERS REVIEW RENOVATIONS

Alex Jurgens, Vice-President and General Manager of Sepracor Canada, and Jim White, trustee for the Mueller Charitable Foundation, get an update on renovations to the Mermaid Imperial Performing Arts Centre from Jim Morrow. Generous donations from both organizations have facilitated the installation of technical equipment.



MERMAID LAUNCHES ITS THEATRE LOFT

Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia will formally launch its long-planned Theatre Loft project in the early Spring of 2008, thanks to support from two Canada Council for the Arts programs – the Supplementary Operating Funds Initiative and the Artist in Residence Program. Housed in the Mermaid Imperial Performing Arts Centre on Gerrish Street in Windsor, NS, the Loft is a 60-seat professional development space dedicated to the pursuit of puppet excellence. The intimate venue is also available to the community and to visiting artists for small-scale theatre and music events.

The Mermaid Loft's inaugural project will feature Brian Fidler, an outstanding Yukon theatre artist with an unusual approach to puppetry. He'll work with Mermaid's Artistic Director, Jim Morrow, to hone his innovative one-person stage piece, **CAM AND LEGS**, for national and international touring.

LUNENBURG ART GALLERY HOSTS DIVERSE MERMAID ACTIVITIES

Mermaid Theatre's staff and creative artists were delighted to accept an invitation from the Lunenburg Art Gallery in May 2007 to participate in a number of community events under its auspices.

Under the leadership of Gill Osmond as well as Gallery staff and volunteers, Mermaid marked the close of its nine-month tour of **SWIMMY, FREDERICK & INCH BY INCH** with a sold-out performance at Lunenburg's Pearl Theatre on May 31st. The presentation was among the events chosen from across the country to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Canada Council for the Arts. Dr. Carol J. Bream, Director of Public Affairs for the arts agency, was in attendance, and spoke about the Council's contributions to Canada's artists.

In collaboration with the Art Gallery, Mermaid undertook three days of puppetry workshops for local schools and helped

to mount an elegant exhibition which ran for three weeks. More than 1800 visitors and spectators participated in the diverse activities. Both organizations look forward to further endeavours.



MERMAID THEATRE STAFF

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
MANAGING DIRECTOR
DIRECTOR OF YOUTHEATRE ADMINISTRATOR
OFFICE/TOUR MANAGER
ARTISTIC CONSULTANT FOR MUSIC AND SOUND DESIGN
LOGISTICS COORDINATOR
PRODUCTION MANAGER
HEAD SEAMSTRESS
SHOP MANAGER
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
MANAGEMENT INTERN

Jim Morrow
Sara Lee Lewis
Christopher Heide
Cathy White
Karen Gasser
Steven Naylor

Peter Smith
Deborah MacLean
Sarah Jane Hart
Jonathan Ford
Marcel Boulet
Lisa Cochran

BOARD MEMBERS

Alex Jurgens (Chair)
Gary Johnson (Past Chair)
Michael L. Morris (Treasurer)
Angie Nicole Herman (Secretary)
Gillian Latham • Bill Murphy
Beverly van'tKruis •
Ed MacDonald • Maura Ryan

MERMAID THEATRE OF NOVA SCOTIA IS REPRESENTED BY



KIDS' ENTERTAINMENT

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