Created by
THÉÂTRE À L'ENVERS
coproduced with **Place des Arts**

Photo: Isabelle Stephen

3 - 8 years

MWANA
and the turtle's secret

www.theatrealenvers.ca

PROMOTIONAL KIT

MWANA and the turtle's secret

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Photos: Michel Pinault and Isabelle Stephen

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Information

Théâtre À l'Envers
5350, Lafond street
Montréal (Québec)
H1X 2X2
info@theatrealenvers.ca
www.theatrealenvers.ca
514.544.9370

Canada and USA booking:

Tara Bailey
Bailiwick Booking Agency
bailiwick.biz@gmail.com
https://bailiwick.biz/
+ 1.416.540.4152

Place des Arts Québec
Conseil des Arts de Montréal
CALQ Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec
Conseil des Arts du Canada
Canada Council for the Arts
Secrétariat aux relations canadiennes Québec
New Nouveau Brunswick Canada

MWANA and the turtle's secret

Play summary

Spun from an Aftrican 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.

Photo: Isabelle Stephen

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 theater 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 *Woânda* 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: Dumisizwe Vuyo Bhembe

Technical sheet

About the show

It is a self-contained show with sound and lighting, 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 version 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 notifiy 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.

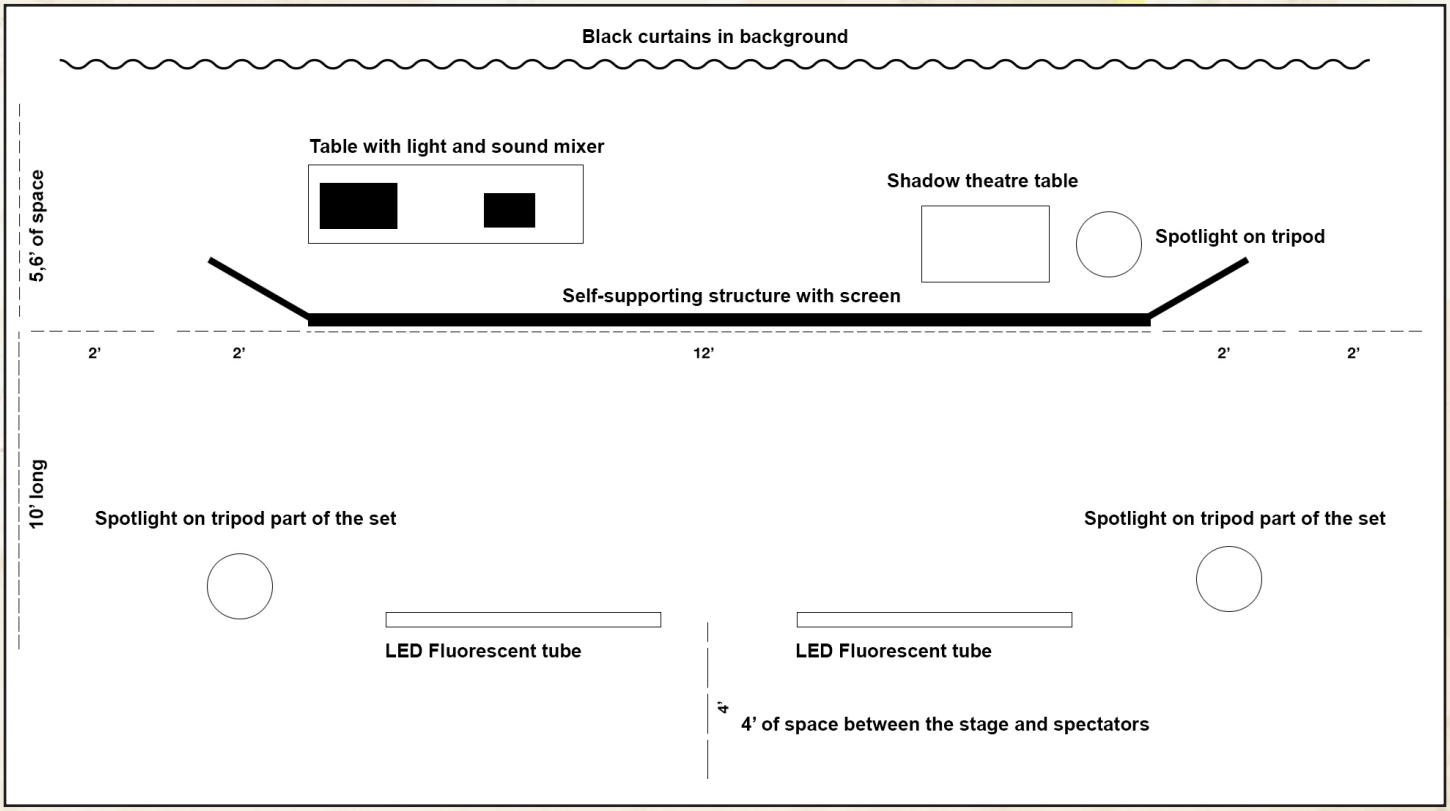
Background:

- 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 m^3

Stage Plan


Black curtains in background
Table with light and sound mixer
Shadow theatre table
Spotlight on tripod
5,6' of space
Self-supporting structure with screen
2'
2'
12'
2'
2'
10' long
Spotlight on tripod part of the set
Spotlight on tripod part of the set
LED Fluorescent tube
LED Fluorescent tube
4'
4' of space between the stage and spectators

ANNEX

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)

Canada and USA booking:

Tara Bailey
Bailiwick Booking Agency
bailiwick.biz@gmail.com
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+ 1.416.540.4152

Recent touring activity

MWANA and the turtle's secret

SEASON 2019 - 2020

City	Venue	Date
Vaudreuil-Dorion	Centre multifonctionnel Francine-Gadbois	September 29, 2019
Dorval	Centre culturel Peter B.Yeomans	November 10, 2019
Saint-Bruno	Centre Marcel-Dulude	February 23, 2020

SEASON 2018 - 2019

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

SEASON 2017 - 2018

City	Venue	Date
Lavaltrie	Chasse Galerie	October 1, 2017
Montreal	Maison de la Culture Côte-des-Neiges	October 7, 2017
Montreal	Place des Arts	October 15, 2017
Montreal	Maison de la Culture Mont-Royal	October 21, 2017
Blainville	Centre Communautaire	October 22, 2017
Tadoussac	Sous-sol de l'église	October 28, 2017
Montreal	Saint-Jax	December 2, 2017
Montreal	Maison de la Culture Notre-Dame-de-Grâce	20 January 20, 2018
Montreal	Maison de la Culture Rivière-des-Prairies	25 February 25, 2018
Vaudreuil-Dorion	École en francisation de l'Hymne-au-Printemps	March 1, 2018
Chambly	Cafétéria de l'École secondaire de Chambly	March 4, 2018
Montreal	Maison de la Culture Ahuntsic	March 8, 2018
Montreal	Maison de la Culture Frontenac	March 10, 2018
Montreal	Maison de la culture Parc-Extension	March 11, 2018
Laval	Centre communautaire Jean-Paul-Campeau	March 4-5, 2018
Repentigny	Centre d'art Diane-Dufresne	March 10-11, 2018
La Sarre	Théâtre de Poche	May 16, 2018
Lac Simon	Centre communautaire de la réserve amérindienne	May 17, 2018
Senneterre	École Saint-Paul	May 18, 2018
Val d'or	Salle Félix-Leclerc	May 19, 2018
Vaudreuil-Soulanges	École Saint-Michel	May 29, 2018
Montreal-Ouest	L'aréna de Montreal-Ouest	July 18, 2018

SEASON 2016 - 2017

City	Venue	Date
Montreal	Place des Arts	February 5, 2017
Montreal	TOHU - Maison d'Haïti - Petits Bonheurs	May 13, 2017
Notre-Dame-des-Prairies	Carrefour Culturel - Petits Bonheurs	May 24, 2017

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: www.montheatre.qc.ca**

Letters of support

DIFFUSION CULTURELLE DE LÉVIS

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

T 514 374-3522
F 514 729-9964
2345, rue Jarry Est, Montréal (Québec) H1Z 4P3 Canada
info@tohu.ca
www.tohu.ca
Billetterie 514 376-TOHU (8648)
Sans frais 1 888 376-TOHU (8648)

Le 31 mai 2017

Madame Patricia Bergeron
Théâtre À l'Envers
5350, rue Lafond
Montréal, Québec
H1X 2X2

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

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