

Sandglass Theater's PUNSCHI



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PUNSCHI



Originally created by Sandglass' Co-Founder, Ines Zeller Bass, now performed by her daughters, Jana Zeller and Shoshana Bass, Punschi is an enchanting tradition of imaginative puppetry in the tradition of German fairground entertainment! Featuring a selection of hand puppet acts, a miniature circus, general buffoonery and music, presented by these second generation international puppeteers. Punschi is an abbreviation for "Puppentheater unter'm Schirm" or "puppet theater under the umbrella", a fitting title as the show is performed under a giant sun umbrella. The show encourages audience participation and response. The performance can be presented as a solo (hand puppets only) or a duet (including the miniature flea circus).

Length of Show: 50 minutes

Recommended audience: ages 4 and up

Available for theaters, schools, libraries, festivals and community events.

Sandglass Theater is eligible for touring subsidy support through the New England Foundation for the Arts NEST grant!

About Sandglass Theater

Sandglass Theater is a renowned theater company specializing in combining puppets with music, actors, and visual imagery. Since 1982, the company's productions have toured internationally in over 30 countries, performing in theaters, festivals and cultural institutions and winning numerous international prizes.

Sandglass is dedicated to the arts of theater and puppetry as a means of exploring contemporary issues, inspiring dialogue, and sparking wonder. We create original ensemble performances and collaborations, present diverse theater artists, produce events that serve our communities, and teach our art.

Creative Team



Ines Zeller Bass (director) Co-Founding Artistic Director of Sandglass, has been performing with puppets since 1968, when she became a member of the Munich marionette theater, Kleines Spiel. In 1978, she created her children's hand puppet theater, Punschi, which toured Europe, Australia and the US. In 1982, Ines co-founded Sandglass Theater with husband Eric. Ines started Sandglass Theater's program for family audiences. Together with Eric, she teaches their approach to puppetry performance and devised composition in workshops in Vermont and abroad. An UNIMA citation winner, Ines also received the Vermont Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts in 2010.



Jana Zeller (performer) has been drawing and painting since she was a child. She trained for many years as an oil painter and portrait painter, worked as a set painter for the theater, the TV and movie industry, and the opera. As one of the daughters of Sandglass Theater, she began painting puppets, sets and props early on, and later became a working puppeteer creating original shows that have been presented in the US, Canada, Mexico, Germany, and India. She performs and teaches puppetry across New England, and art classes for children in her studio in Brattleboro, Vermont.



Shoshana Bass (performer) is Artistic Director of Sandglass Theater based in Putney, Vermont on the unceded lands of the Abenaki people. Having been raised in a traveling family of internationally acclaimed puppeteers, she has spent her life witnessing and in dialogue with artistic voices of diverse cultures, heritages, and perspectives. Now she performs, directs, and choreographs internationally. She is a touring ensemble member with the company in Babylon, Journeys of Refugees; Rock the Boat; and Punschi and her solo performance When I Put On Your Glove.

Technical Needs

Staging:

We need a 9' overhead clearance. 10' by 10' is a comfortable playing space for us, but the show is flexible in it's set up. We can perform indoors or outdoors (but outdoors we do not have the option of overhead projection to expand audience size). We have a large sun umbrella puppet booth and a self constructed table for the flea circus. We would travel with the show as luggage, and ship only the umbrella stand, unless the venue can supply one. We need the venue to supply one stool.

Sound:

We need a sound system out of which to run our microphone lapel.

Lighting:

In theaters we work with a simple wash and specials on the hand puppet show and flea circus. Outdoors we work with natural lighting.

Personnel:

2 performers

1 technician: lights (supplied by venue)

Set up/ Strike time:

1 hour

Videotaping of the show is not permitted unless previously agreed upon.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL US. THANK YOU!



Workshops

AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Puppetry is an amazing means of encouraging expression in shy children, developing literacy, hand/eye coordination, and delving into the imagination.

We can customize a workshop to your audience base in which we construct a simple puppet that is appropriate for the age group we are working with and show basic manipulation techniques. Each participant gets to take their hand made puppet home.

We require an outlet, worktables and chairs, scissors, markers, pencils. We will need assistants for groups larger than 10 children.



Marketing



Promotional Photos

Video Promo

“Punschi” is pure joy! This performance combines the exuberance and flair of European street theater with the sanctity of a family tradition passed down through generations. Live music, multiple styles of puppetry, clowning, and physical theater support hilarious lines delivered in German, English, Gibberish, and Kazoo. Audiences of all ages will leave laughing and cheering for Kasper, Fritzzi, Tschokolino and the amazing sisters who bring their stories to life!

–Roxie Myhrum, Artistic Director, Puppet Showplace Theater

Sandglass Theater’s Punschi, performed by Shoshana Bass and Jana Zeller, is a delightful and compelling puppet show performed with great zest, skill, and humor by two eminently talented puppeteers. Jana Zeller’s performance of Kasper and the Cow is a masterful and whimsical re-interpretation of the traditional German puppet character as a comic hero whose efforts to go off on a trip with his red suitcase are flustered by a comic cow, and aided by a friendly giant. Shoshana Bass’s Fritzzi’s Flea Circus is an astounding spectacle of miniature proportions following its tiny hero through an adventurous day of performing incredible circus feats by means of brilliant theatrical tricks. These shows enthralled our audience of children and adults.

–Dr. John Bell, Director, Ballard Institute

This is one of the finest, if not the finest, theater-related program for young children we have seen.

–The Vermont Arts Council

If one observes how the young ones identify with the happenings on the stage, one would like to be young oneself once more.

Süddeutsche Zeitung, Germany

History, Inspiration, Legacy



This collection of shows is derived from the old fairground traditions of German Puppet Theater, and was originally created by Ines Zeller Bass in Munich, Germany. Kasper became a children's entertainment hero in the 1980s and the flea circus holds its roots in the traditional entertainment of European courts, and can still be enjoyed at the Oktober Fest in Munich. Ines grew up surrounded by these cultural staples and was captured by the magical innocence of this form. Punschi made its first appearance in the early 1980s at a puppet festival in Munich, where Ines improvised her stage by stringing a rope and covering it with a dirty tarp. She used the traditional characters and created original stories. From there she played in markets and parks, political rallies, kindergartens and her children's birthday parties under her huge sun umbrella. The piece began touring internationally in 1983.

Kasper has always held a rapport with his audiences all over the world and the interactive nature of the tradition includes jokes for both children and adults, and plenty of opportunity to call out to the characters on stage, and help move the story forward.

Ines' daughters, Jana and Shoshana, grew up traveling around with these shows, helping to set up, and playing with the puppets backstage. In 2013 Ines retired from performing her family shows and handed the pieces, sets and the puppets over to her two daughters. Jana and Shoshana have combined the shows and filled them with musical interludes, snappy banter and a blessing honoring their mother and the living on of a tradition.