A Promise is a Promise
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Robert M. Hupp
Artistic Director
Syracuse Stage
820 E Genesee Street
Syracuse, NY 13210
www.SyracuseStage.org
Director of Educational Outreach
Lauren Unbekant
(315) 443-1150
Assistant Director of Education
Kate Laissle
(315) 442-7755
Group Sales & Student Matinees
Tracey White
(315) 443-9844
Box Office
(315) 443-3275
A Promise is a Promise

BY
Barabar Poggemiller

DIRECTED BY
Lauren Unbekant

ALLASHUA
Bryn Dolan

MOTHER
Mary McGowan

FATHER
Jacob Arbittier

QALLUPILLUIT
Rupert Krueger

STAGE MANAGER
Leola Powell

SCENIC DESIGN
Scott R. Holdredge

COSTUME DESIGN
Gretchen Darrow-Crotty

ORIGINAL COMPOSITION & SOUND DESIGNER
Emmett Van Slyke

Robert M. Hupp
Artistic Director

Jill A. Anderson
Managing Director
As you take your students on the exciting journey into the world of live theatre we hope that you’ll take a moment to help prepare them to make the most of their experience. Unlike movies or television, live theatre offers the thrill of unpredictability.

With the actors present on stage, the audience response becomes an integral part of the performance and the overall experience: the more involved and attentive the audience, the better the show. Please remind your students that they play an important part in the success of the performance!

A FEW REMINDERS...

BE PROMPT
Give your students plenty of time to arrive, find their seats, and get situated. Have them visit the restrooms before the show begins!

RESPECT OTHERS
Please remind your students that their behavior and responses affect the quality of the performance and the enjoyment of the production for the entire audience. Live theatre means the actors and the audience are in the same room, and just as the audience can see and hear the performers, the performers can see and hear the audience. Please ask your students to avoid disturbing those around them. Please no talking or unnecessary or disruptive movement during the performance. Also, please remind students that cellphones should be switched completely off. No texting or tweeting, please. When students give their full attention to the action on the stage, they will be rewarded with the best performance possible.

GOOD NOISE, BAD NOISE
Instead of instructing students to remain totally silent, please discuss the difference between appropriate responses (laughter, applause, participation when requested) and inappropriate noise (talking, cell phones, etc).

STAY WITH US
Please do not leave or allow students to leave during the performance except in absolute emergencies. Again, reminding them to use the restrooms before the performance will help eliminate unnecessary disruption.
Dear Educator,

Live theatre is a place for people to gather and experience the joys, triumphs, and sorrows life has to offer.

The Syracuse Stage Education Department is committed to providing the tools to make learning in and through the arts possible to address varied learning styles and to make connections to curriculum and life itself. It is our goal in the education department to maximize the theatre experience for our education partners with experiential learning and in-depth arts programming. Thank you for your interest and support!

Sincerely,

Lauren Unbekant
Director of Educational Outreach

2016/2017 EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH SPONSORS

Syracuse Stage is committed to providing students with rich theatre experiences that explore and examine what it is to be human. Research shows that children who participate in or are exposed to the arts show higher academic achievement, stronger self-esteem, and improved ability to plan and work toward a future goal.

Many students in our community have their first taste of live theatre through Syracuse Stage’s outreach programs. Last season more than 15,500 students from across New York State attended or participated in the Bank of America Children’s Tour, artsEmerging, the Young Playwrights Festival, the Franklin Project, Young Adult Council, and our Student Matinee Program.

We gratefully acknowledge the corporations and foundations who support our commitment to in-depth arts education for our community.
ABOUT THE PLAY

SYNOPSIS

Allashua is so excited to go fishing on the first day of spring. Her mother warns her to only fish at the lake and not the sea, as the Qallupilluit live under the sea ice. The Qallupilluit are monsters who snatch children without their parents at the sea ice cracks and Allashua’s parents are staying home with her siblings. Allashua promises to only visit the lake, but she instead goes to the sea.

As Allusha fishes, she insults the Qallupilluit as she does not believe in them. Soon, the Qallupilluit appear and drag her under the ice. In desperation, Allashua promises to return to the sea with her brothers and sisters if the Qallupilluit promise to let her go. They free her and Allashua stumbles back to her house, nearly freezing on her way.

When she gets home, Allashua’s parents warm her and she tells them of her promise to the Qallupilluit. A promise is a promise and Allashua’s mother has a plan. Allashua’s mother invites the Qallupilluit to a goodbye party for her children. Allashua’s parents give the Qallupilluit food and start playing music and dancing. The Qallupilluit have not danced before and do not notice when Allashua and her siblings go down to the sea ice. Allashuah and her siblings call out to the Qallupilluit at the sea ice several times, but the Qallupilluit are not there and do not hear them. Allashua returns to the party with her siblings. She has kept her promise. The Qallupilluit are outwitted and return to the sea without any children.
DAILY LIFE

GEOGRAPHY & CLIMATE
The Inuit people live in the arctic and subarctic climates in the Canadian province of Nanavut. Allushua’s family lives in this area, along the Hudson Bay. The Inuit people also live in parts of Greenland and Alaska. The temperatures where the Inuit live are very cold, with frigid winters dipping to -40 degrees Fahrenheit on average. The summers are short with cool to moderate temperatures. Because of this climate, the Inuit have been unable to rely on agriculture. Instead, they have historically been hunters and gatherers with communities traveling between locations based on the season and availability of game. The climate where the Inuit make their homes affects many aspects of their lives and culture.

CLOTHING
Traditional Inuit clothing needed to provide both protection against extremely cold and wet conditions while also being sustainably made in locations with few resources. The Inuit skillfully made waterproof footwear and clothing from the skins of animals they used for food. Women carried their small children on their backs, requiring more material in the back to cover the infants and small children as they were carried. This is called an Amauti. Women’s clothing was often more adorned than men’s. Many different designs were created by sewing different colors of fur together. Many Inuit continue to wear traditional clothes.

TRANSPORTATION & DWELLINGS
Like their clothing, Inuit homes, boats, and sleds were made of things found in their environment. Boats and sleds were covered in animal skins. As groups traveled based on the location of game, there were winter and summer dwelling styles. Summer dwellings were either skin tents or sod homes. Winter dwellings were most often made of packed snow, though if the snow wasn’t suitable skin tents were used.
ORAL TRADITION

The story of the Qallupilluit is part of the Inuit oral tradition. Stories, ideas, and religious beliefs were passed down from generation to generation through spoken word. Until very recently, the language the Inuit speak, Inuktitut, was a completely spoken language with no written component. In order to pass down the knowledge of the generations, a rich array of stories are told. Stories similar to the ones about the Qallupilluit were cautionary. The Inuit created the story of the Qallupilluit to protect their children from venturing too close to the cracks in the sea ice, which can quickly expand creating a danger of falling into the sea.

THROAT SINGING

Inuit throat singing was traditionally performed by two women as a friendly competition and game. The leader sets the tone and pace and the second person follows with the same or similar sounds half a second behind. The pair holds onto each other’s arms, making a sawing motion or swaying back and forth. The person who outlasts the other or does not laugh is declared the winner. The sounds heard in throat singing often mimic the noises of the natural world around the singers, such as imitating the sound of sea birds. This game helped to entertain children and women who stayed at home while men hunted. Throat singing is making a resurgence with two 11-year-old girls performing throat singing at the Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s swearing in ceremony. See a video here- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBgLvfe8P1g

THE SPIRIT OF ALL THINGS

Traditional Inuit beliefs are a form of animism, according to which all objects and living things or beings have a spirit. The belief is that all things happen through the involvement of some spirit. Spirits can affect people’s lives and can be controlled by magical charms and talismans. Various taboos were observed to make sure that animal spirits were not offended, and when animals were killed for food, certain rituals were observed. Communal rites centered on preparation for the hunt, as this was the most important activity for survival in a hostile environment.

LEARN INUKTITUT!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Inuktitut</th>
<th>Phonetics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How are you?</td>
<td>Qanuipit?</td>
<td>Ka-nwee-peet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am fine</td>
<td>Qanuingittunga</td>
<td>Ka-nweeng-ni-toon-ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your name?</td>
<td>Kinauvit?</td>
<td>Kee-nau-veet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you</td>
<td>Qujannamiik</td>
<td>Coo-yan-na-mee-ick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are welcome</td>
<td>Ilaali</td>
<td>Ee-lah-li</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Morning</td>
<td>Ulaakut</td>
<td>Oo-lah-coot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sled</td>
<td>Qanutik</td>
<td>Caw-moo-tick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walrus</td>
<td>Aiviq</td>
<td>Eye-vick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polar Bear</td>
<td>Nanuq</td>
<td>Oo-lah-coot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seal</td>
<td>Nattiq</td>
<td>Naa-tick</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fun and Games

Bone and Stick Game

The goal of the game is to get the ‘bone’ or cardboard tube onto the stick or pencil by holding onto the stick and swinging the tube onto the stick. It helped children build dexterity and precision needed for hunting.

Materials Needed:
- A short (3-5 inch) cardboard tube
- A stick or unsharpened pencil
- Yarn
- Hole Punch
- Tape
- Scissors

1. Punch a small hole in the edge of the cardboard tube
2. Tie one end of the yarn through the hole
3. Tie and tape the other end of the yarn about a quarter of the way down the stick or pencil.
4. Holding onto the stick, swing the cardboard tube onto the stick. It’s harder than it seems and takes lots of practice!

Can your students think of other games that are similar? What traditions cross cultural and geographic boundaries?

Building Community

Traditional Inuit games help to build community and friendship while also building physical strength and agility. Being stronger and fitter helped you be a better hunter, and the games could help cheer spirits when times were tough. Both of these were necessities of living in a harsh environment.

Kneel Jump

Starting on your knees, jump forward onto your feet trying to go as far as you can. The person who jumps the further distance wins.

One Foot High Kick

Have one person hold a pole with a ball on a string hanging off the end. Have this person hold the stick so that the ball is just above waist high. The person kicking starts on two feet and jumps up, kicking the ball with one foot and landing balanced on the same foot that kicked the ball.
**elements of drama**

**PLOT**
What is the story line? What happened before the play started? What does each character want? What do they do to achieve their goals? What do they stand to gain/lose?

**THEME**
What ideas are wrestled with in the play? What questions does the play pose? Does it present an opinion?

**CHARACTER**
Who are the people in the story? What are their relationships? Why do they do what they do? How does age/status/etc. affect them?

**LANGUAGE**
What do the characters say? How do they say it? When do they say it?

**MUSIC**
How do music and sound help to tell the story?

**SPECTACLE**
How do the elements come together to create the whole performance?


Any piece of theatre comprises multiple art forms. As you explore this production with your students, examine the use of:

**WRITING**
**VISUAL ART/DESIGN**
**MUSIC/SOUND**
**DANCE/MOVEMENT**

**ACTIVITY**
At its core, drama is about characters working toward goals and overcoming obstacles. Ask students to use their bodies and voices to create characters who are: very old, very young, very strong, very weak, very tired, very energetic, very cold, very warm. Have their characters interact with others. Give them an objective to fulfill despite environmental obstacles. Later, recap by asking how these obstacles affected their characters and the pursuit of their objectives.

**INQUIRY**
How are each of these art forms used in this production? Why are they used? How do they help to tell the story?
elements of design

LINE can have length, width, texture, direction and curve. There are 5 basic varieties: vertical, horizontal, diagonal, zig-zag, and curved.

SHAPE is two-dimensional and encloses space. It can be geometric (e.g. squares and circles), man-made, or free-form.

FORM is three-dimensional. It encloses space and fills space. It can be geometric (e.g. cubes and cylinders), man-made, or free-form.

COLOR has three basic properties: HUE is the name of the color (e.g. red, blue, green), INTENSITY is the strength of the color (bright or dull), VALUE is the range of lightness to darkness.

TEXTURE refers to the “feel” of an object’s surface. It can be smooth, rough, soft, etc. Textures may be ACTUAL (able to be felt) or IMPLIED (suggested visually through the artist’s technique).

SPACE is defined and determined by shapes and forms. Positive space is enclosed by shapes and forms, while negative space exists around them.
The Presentation

Have students respond in small groups or conduct a group discussion based on questions such as:

- Why did the playwright use songs in the play? What does the music bring to the story?
- Was the play funny or serious? How did that affect the story?
- How did the actors use movement and voice to create their characters?
- The designers made many choices when they created the set and costumes for *A Promise is a Promise*. What did their designs add?

The Story

Students can respond verbally or in writing to questions such as:

- How would you describe each character in this play to someone who has not seen it?
- How did each of them change during the play?
- What parts of the play are specific to where the characters live? Could this story take place where you live? Why or why not?
- What does Allashua learn about keeping promises? Why are promises important? What would you say to Allashua if she told you she planned to go down to the sea ice?
Writing a Review

After students have outlined the story and discussed the production elements, they can write reviews. Have them read their reviews aloud or post them online for other classes to read and respond. Reviews usually include the following:

• a brief summary of the story
• comments on the quality of the play itself
• a description of the costumes and set and a comment on whether these were interesting and appropriate
• comments on the actors’ character portrayals and on the director’s skill at pulling the whole thing together
REFERENCES:

SOURCES AND RESOURCES
The Rag and Bone study guide for A Promise is a Promise
https://www.ragandbone.ca/PDFs/promise_guide.pdf

Inuit Cultural Online Resource
http://icor.ottawainuitchildrens.com/

Lesson on the Inuit
GREAT EXPECTATIONS
OCTOBER 19 – NOVEMBER 6

Disney and Cameron Mackintosh’s
MARY POPPINS
NOVEMBER 26 – JANUARY 8

DISGRACED
JANUARY 25 – FEBRUARY 12

AIN’T MISBEHAVIN’
THE FATS WALLER
MUSICAL SHOW
MARCH 1 – 26

HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE
APRIL 5 – 23

DEATHTRAP
MAY 10 – 28

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