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REPORT ON PLAY PRODUCTION OF PUPPET SHOW
"ANANSE'S TRICK DOES DOUBLE WORK"

ORIGINAL PLAY BY CAROL KORTY

ADAPTED TO BE PLAYED WITH MODIFIED

BUNRAKU PUPPETS AT

WATKINS NATURE CENTER, MARYLAND JULY 5-AUGUST 5, 1977

ALICE FERGUSON AMPHITHEATER, ACCOKFEK AUGUST 5

AUGUST 6, 1977

WOLF TRAP FARM'S "LITTLE THEATRE-IN-THE-WOODS" SEPTEMBER 5,
1977

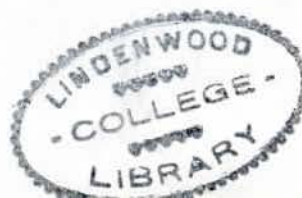
DESIGN, PRODUCTION AND DIRECTION: DIETLINDE HIBBEN

PUPPETEERS: PRINCE GEORGE'S PUPPETEERS, MARYLAND

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (SPECIALIZING IN PUPPETRY)
LINDENWOOD COLLEGES
SEPTEMBER 16, 1977

FACULTY ADMINISTRATOR: SHARON RUBIN

FACULTY SPONSOR: ALLAN STEVENS



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ILLUSTRATED WITH 27 SLIDES

PROGRAM

POSTER

1) MOTIVATION FOR PUPPET SHOW PROJECT

1) Culminating Project for M.A. degree

In order to show acquired skills in design, construction, direction and performing in the puppetry field, production and direction of a puppet show seemed a logical choice for my Culminating Project.

I had been working as an intern since May 1977 with the Prince George's Puppeteers and was well acquainted with their performance skills, since I had produced and performed a shadow show in the spring of this year with their help.

In early May I was asked by the director of the P.G. Puppeteers to design and produce a show which could be given 6 times a week in an indoor auditorium at Watkins Regional Park in Maryland during July and early August.

I was also planning on playing the same show on two nights in the small wooded Alice Ferguson Amphitheater in my own community of Accokeek, Maryland and at the International Children's Festival at Wolf Trap Farm for the Performing Arts.

2) Entertaining children

Since the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission sponsored this program, they arranged for groups of playground children to be brought to the Watkins Park.

Consequently I didn't have to worry about publicity and at the same time knew that I had children from pre-school age to about 6. grade in my audience. Knowing that I had this definite young audience made planning and focusing on this project very inspiring and worthwhile.

II) THE SCRIPT

1) Considerations for selecting a script.

Age of children

4 to 12 years

Background

Mixed socio-economic backgrounds of playground groups and walk-in family groups coming from the whole Prince George's County.

Size and location of auditoriums

Watkins Nature Center:

has air-conditioned carpeted room, approximately 26x40 feet, with no stage structure; windows can be darkened. About 30 chairs for adults are available. Children sit on floor.

Total seating capacity between 100 and 120.

Auditorium is an extension of the Watkins Nature Center, surrounded by woods. Nature displays (live animals, plants, special ecological exhibitions) in the main lobby.

Alice Ferguson Amphitheater:

has a natural background of old trees, framing a 25x16 feet, 2 foot high open stage. There is space for about 100 to 150 people to be seated.

Wolf Trap Farm Park:

stage there is properly called the "Little Theatre-in-the-woods", providing an approximate 25x20x3 feet wooden stage platform, framed by triple wooden wings and closed off towards the back with a wooden backdrop (wooden sliding doors). The audience sits on wooden benches (seating capacity about 300) in a naturally uphill sloping area in front of the stage.

Number and quality of puppeteers

The P.G. County Puppeteers consisted of three professional puppeteers and myself as an intern, all with hand, rod and shadow puppet manipulation experience. We all knew each other from previous productions.

Time for production

Eight weeks time for design, construction and production.

Budget

\$ 100 to \$200

Budget, time and the natural surrounding of all three locations directed me to look for a simple story which still

would add some special educational aspect to the main goal of entertaining children with a live puppet show. I was looking for an animal story from a foreign country, considering India Indian, Japanese and African folk tales. After I came across Carol Korty's book "Plays from African Folk tales", which contains four plays for young actors, I was immediately convinced that two of the four plays, "Mr. Hare takes Mr. Leopard for a Ride", and "Ananse's Trick does Does Double Work", would do justice to all the above considerations.

2) Royalty

I wrote to the playwright, explaining my production project and asking her for possible royalty-free productions. However, even for non-profit productions a royalty fee had to be paid. I learned that the sponsoring M-NCPPC didn't have enough money to pay royalty fees for two plays. Consequently I decided to play just "Ananse", which would be long enough to fill one performance bill and also substantial enough to hold the attention of a mixed audience. Carol Korty agreed to that proposal and cut the initial fee down to a very reasonable sum.

3) Pondering the text

a) Defining quality, mood and theme of the play

The playwright introduces the four plays in her book as dramatic material that could be adapted to the needs of many different production set-ups. Emphasizing dramatic play elements such as simple music, dance, mime, and masks, she urges the producer to include the audience's imagination into his/her production planning. Introducing the children to the well-known character of the Ashanti tribe folklore, Carol Korty wrote the play after studying the traditional stories.

Reading the play put me in the same mood as if I had been reading an Aesop's fable from a foreign country: conflicting human characteristics and behavior patterns are represented by the five animal characters, teaching us a moral.

ANANSE the spider:

arrogant, lazy, tricky but not really vicious, forever looking for a free meal, somewhat similar to the French Guignol or the English Punch stock characters. We recognize ourselves at least in some of the features of this human-like spider and therefore will always be a little sympathetic with him.

LION, WART HOG and GOAT represent some virtuous types,

working hard for their living, yet being too pompous (LION), too dumb(WART HOG) and too silly(GOAT) to see ANANSE's scheme.

TURKEY, predominantly cool-headed and equal to ANANSE's quick thinking, catalyzes the action episodes towards a climax, causing ANANSE's trick to backfire on himself, and so establishing the theme, "The trickster doesn't always come out on top".

b) Movement, rhythm and music

Starting with a medium pace when introducing the characters, the tempo picks up and intensifies through fast dialogues between ANANSE and the three animals, either as individuals or as a group, interspersing this dramatic build-up with little halting remarks from the TURKEY who as a counterpart to ANANSE brings the whole development to its climax. Rhythmic patterns in the text should set the responding body movement pattern and could be underlined by simple percussion sounds (as suggested by the playwright). Using simple rhythms and sounds throughout the play could help to create a continuous flowing action. At that point I considered to give each animal a characteristic instrument which would not only enrich the overall sound pattern but at the same time connect a visual image with a sound image.

c) Action outline

Although the play was not divided into different scenes by the playwright, I called the individual episodes or beats "scenes". They are all introduced by an entrance of one or more characters.

SCENE I: INTRODUCTION OF CHARACTERS, ESTABLISHING
RELATIONSHIPS

One by one GOAT, WART HOG and LION proceed onto the stage, displaying their goods which they are planning to sell at the market. ANANSE enters, shows great interest in LION's fish, WART HOG's corn and GOAT's kola nuts. He proposes to join the animals on their trip to market. All three animals, having been tricked out of their goods before, refuse to let him come along and WART HOG tells him that the only way to get some goods for himself is through work.

SCENE II: ANANSE'S DREAM

ANANSE, determined that he could trick the animals again into giving him their goods, invents his dream about the horrible "OLD HAG", who would do terrible things to anybody who would say one bad word about another person. He wins LION's trust who in turn convinces WART HOG and GOAT - in spite of TURKEY's warnings - that ANANSE's dream about OLD HAG is to be respected.

SCENE III: ANANSE TRICKS THE WART HOG

SCENE IV: ANASE TRICKS THE LION

SCENE V: ANANSE TRICKS THE GOAT

In SCENES III, IV and V ANANSE demonstrates with the help of a big rock his ridiculous methods of growing corn, fishing and collecting kola nuts. His trick works: each animal calls him stupid or crazy, giving ANANSE the lever to scare the animals with OLD HAG, and ending up with a pile of goods which are given to him by the animals as an appeasement for her.

SCENE VI: TURKEY'S PREMONITION

TURKEY finds all three animals without goods and realizes that his doubts about ANANSE's dream were justified. He convinces the angry animals not to take their goods back but to make ANANSE give the goods back to them.

SCENE VII: ANANSE'S TRICK BACKFIRES

ANANSE finds an obnoxiously disinterested TURKEY just when he is about to collect all the goods. TURKEY pretends that he is on his way to town to get a hair cut, thus provoking ANANSE to call him stupid. When TURKEY

warns him about OLD HAG he becomes frantic, believing into his own made-up dream and begging TURKEY to help him . Just then the three animals appear from their hiding place, roaring terribly just as OLD HAG might do it, completely convincing ANANSE that the only thing left for him to do would be to return all the animals' goods to them. Only a moment later he realizes with fury that h e was the one who got tricked.

III) FINDING THE BASIC DESIGN CONCEPT FOR THE SHOW

1) From research to general design concept.

In order to become familiar with the traditional ANANSE character I read many ANANSE stories and other African folk tales from Ghana and the surrounding areas. I went to the African Museum in Washington, looking at masks and costumes and talked with one African guide about puppetry in Africa. He explained to me that there is very little puppetry used to tell stories to the children. Only on the occasion of a state funeral are people being entertained with puppets. Stories are usually told at night around the camp fire, maybe using drums to emphasize the story lines. I was intrigued by the stark expressive beauty of the African sculptures, masks and costumes, which I studied

at the museum and in books. I also read about the important role which music plays in the life of most Africans, and listened to many records of tribal songs and instrumental music (see bibliography).

I knew that my own background would not allow me to imitate either the visual or musical African elements. Yet I tried nevertheless to instill into my general design concept a mood or feeling of African beauty and simplicity.

- 2) Puppet type: modified Bunraku puppet
 - a) General concept.

Since the whole theme of the story is to make a point about human, not animal behavior, I didn't want to go into a realistic representation of the animal characters. I wanted to keep the human element in the design of the puppet by placing the human actor not inside or under a mask (like the playwright suggested for dramatization with live actors), but wanted to use the Japanese practice of the Bunraku puppeteer, who lends life and expression to his inanimate puppet by manipulating it directly from behind, being fully visible to the audience. Instead of two or three puppeteers as in the classic Bunraku theatre, I would use only one puppeteer for each puppet (sometimes even using one puppeteer for two pup-

pets, when all five characters would be on stage simultaneously).

If the design of the puppeteer's costume and the design of the puppet would complement each other, the puppeteer could potentially emphasize and/or contrast the form and the movement pattern of the puppet (which would be a definite modification of the classic Bunraku manipulation style, where the puppeteer's body and facial expression stays very quiet during the performance).

Thus creating a puppeteer-puppet unit, the puppeteer's movements would be free, his speech unmuffled and a direct puppeteer-puppet-audience relationship could be established.

b) Technical considerations.

The SIZE of the puppets had to be designed to compete with the puppeteers' sizes as well as with the spaces of the indoor and outdoor theaters. It had to be near life size for the three animals (LION, WART HOG, GOAT) and about three feet for the characters ANANSE and TURKEY who would be played with faster, more precise movements.

(Fig. 1)

The CONSTRUCTION DESIGN had to be simple, the head should be sculpted in a mask-like fashion, the body with few rigid armatures, facilitating very flexible neck movements

and big or subtle body movements for the big animals.

(Fig. 37)

In contrast to the big, soft shapes of the big animals, TURKEY and ANANSE should have harder and smaller bodies, using rigid materials (plastic bottles, foam board and wood).

(Fig. 36 and Fig 4).

HANDLING OF PROPS could be done by either constructing heads with jointed jaws, so that the puppeteer could pick up the props with its mout, or by adding sleeves with open backs to the costume through which the puppeteer coul insert his/her arm and pick up the props. (Fig. 37)

3) Character casting: body, voice, movements.

Selecting the most essential characteristics for each character's body, voice and movements, I made the following chart:

	BODY	VOICE	MOVEMENTS
ANANSE:	Fall, thin-waisted, spindly spider arms, distinctly different from other animals	brisk, at times sly and relatively high in pitch	moves on play board; should have some exaggerated, funny movements, developed from body design.
LION:	Big, broad, pompous costume, mane important, well-formed features, but helpless expression at times. (Tongue hanging)	big, low-pitched voice	big movements, important gait in his walk; sweeping gestures; puppet can be played high or low, using the entire stage space.
WART HOG:	Big, triangular shape, matching LION's in size, drab colors, grotesque costume	hoarse, coarse, occasional grunting noises	slow, stamping walk; puppet can be played high or low, using entire stage space.
GOAT:	Tall, long neck, attractive costume, smile on face, raised eyebrows, beard. Body size compatible with LION's and WART HOG's.	matronly style of speaking, at times excited and high, often interspersed with laughs	swinging walk, at times quite exaggerated. Puppet can be played high or low, using entire stage space.
TURKEY:	Type of body should be compatible with ANANSE's style and size; should be bald; smart look on his face. Tail feathers, moveable legs, that could produce sounds on play board.	sharp, nasal voice, high in pitch	neck and leg movements are important, and exaggerated staccato sounds could be made with wooden feet on play board. Moves only on or above play board.

4) Visualizing the puppets on paper (sketches).

The following sketches will illustrate the design development "on paper" that started with getting acquainted first with the natural shape of the animal, abstracting it into a form that would bear the essential character features (Fig. 2-27).

It was very important to me to develop clean, rhythmic lines for the mask and body designs (Fig. 6, 11, 14, 15, 21, 25).

I also tried to picture the designs of mass distribution (puppet forms in background, on play board and upstage) in the ever changing patterns during the different scenes (Fig. 28a-d).

5) Stage design.

The stage design developed from considering the different functions of a stage that would be suitable for the above described basic puppet designs of the puppets and their puppeteers.

a) Dimensions.

The height of the play board had to allow comfortable playing position for the puppeteers whose puppets were

supported all the time on the play board (ANANSE and TURKEY) without hiding the puppets in the background. I figured with an 18"x24"x8' main play board (enough width to give the puppets some space to pass each other or to move props and a length that would be in proportion to the entire auditorium or outdoor theater. Adding to an estimated 8 feet of the main play board about 2-3 feet lengths on either side for entrances and exits, I added an extra 4 feet length on either side for the 4'x7' flats which were already available to me from the P.G. Puppeteers (Fig. 29).

This would provide a playing space of about 12 feet length, 8 feet depth, allowing dramatically meaningful movements and space compositions for the puppeteer-puppet units.

b) Decor.

Design and decoration of the stage should enhance the story-telling mood of the play, enclosing an outdoor area in an African setting (Fig. 29, 31, 32).

c) Scenery.

The only piece of scenery, the kola tree, should

blend in with the stage decoration and should be placed near the center of the upstage area (probably hung from the ceiling in order not to get into the way of the players. See Fig.29, 31, 32, 33).

d) Backdrop.

The backdrop should be simple, suggesting an outdoor location. The Watkins Center auditorium has a built-in pine wall, the Alice Ferguson Amphitheater the natural surrounding of big trees and shrubs, the Wolf Trap Farm's stage a wooden backdrop.

e) Lighting.

Throughout the play I wanted both downstage and upstage lit uniformly bringing out the warm colors that I was going to use for costumes and stage cloth covers. There would be no need to dim down in between scenes. Bringing in the light in the beginning and dimming them down in the end, would be sufficient to indicate beginning and end of the dramatized story. For the downstage area I planned to use 4 "coffee can" spot lights with amber, pink and grey or blue

gels; for the upstage area I could use 2 spotlights on each side of the stage, mounted on 8' poles. I would use the same amber/pink and grey/blue color scheme for their gels.

All needed equipment would be available to me from the P.G. Puppeteers.

Note: Although using lights for this show would add to the story-telling atmosphere, I wanted the production of the play independent of a set of lights in order to be able to perform the show - at least during the day - just about any place.

7) Color scheme.

As I mentioned already, I wanted to use warm colors for the stage covers and the scenery and also for the puppeteers' costumes, adding some bright, contrasting decorations onto the costumes of the three big animals (Fig. 8, 13, 17, 22, 27, 32).

IV) PRODUCTION AND DIRECTION

1) Puppet head-and-body construction.

After determining that puppet heads had to be mask-like in design, I made a very simple clay model of ANANSE's face which was to be covered with celastic. However, the size was too small and the features still not expressive enough. Remembering Albrect Roser's description of his celastic sculpting method(see bibliography), I started to experiment with folding and cutting paper to gain a simple and expressive mask (Fig. 6). After two weeks of concentrated design work and lots of trial-and-error experiences, I had finished the five mask-like puppet heads for my show. It was important to me to have the heads ready sculpted before I would meet with the puppeteers for the first time, since I wanted to show them on hand of the puppet masks the general design concept of my show.

Advantages of Roser's paper and celastic folding method are:

- * Cheap paper can be used to develop pattern (Fig. 35 a).
- * Reproduction of heads can be simply done by tracing the master pattern.(Fig. 35 d).
- * Clear lines, expressive features (SLIDES 1-5).
- * Mask or head is lightweight and very sturdy.

See Fig. 35 a-g for mask construction method.

By giving each puppet head one movable part, I wanted to add some additional lively feature to each character:

ANANSE: tilting mouth piece, used only to change his expression to make a point, not with every line (SLIDE 1).

TURKEY: a long neck that could slide out of the body's collar (compare SLIDES 5 and 13).

LION, WART HOG, GOAT: all were constructed as hand-in-mouth puppet heads (SLIDES 18, 16, 21).

While I was developing the masks I was also experimenting with different body construction materials (form and texture), matching in style to the mask-like head, always looking for a design that would allow maximum stylized body movement, especially a loose neck joint (Fig. 37).

I considered for a long time to use plastic bottles as an armature for the three animals body construction (Fig. 36).

Advantages being ready-made handle, lightweight big shape for body that could even be steadied on the play board.

I realized soon however, that this armature would make the puppet very clumsy and hard to transport. I abandoned the idea of using plastic bottles and later developed a much simpler device to shape and manipulate the puppet body (see drawing of wooden board in Fig. 37). Using a plywood board with a handle the puppeteer could hold the head with one hand, while he/she could give movements in all directions to the softly draped body by means of moving the board.

The fabric, used for neck and body, would be sewn onto the

board, stitching through little drilled holes along the edge of it.

Since none of the three animals needed the support of the play board, entering and going out as a group or by themselves, the puppeteer could play them in the entire stage area, raise them high or make them shrink low, according to the dramatic message. Consequently I had to plan to cut the costumes quite long, using fabric that would drape well.

In contrast to the body construction of the three animals the bodies of ANANSE and TURKEY had to be supported by the play board and thus had to be smaller and more articulated in their form and movement potentials. Wooden legs, jointed to a rigid wood and foam board triangular body (ANANSE) and a plastic milk bottle (TURKEY) would add the desired body form contrast to the three big animals (Fig. 38, 39).

- 2) Interconnection of design-construction-rehearsing processes as shown in my log.

In order to show how intricately connected the different production and direction processes necessary for the staging of the puppet show turned out to be, I would like to quote the entries of my log between June 13 and July 5. Since I had to to rehearse as a performing puppeteer as well as to direct the show, I found it especially necessary and gratifying to listen to the other puppeteers and to my faculty sponsor's comments. Although I always had to make the final decision, I know that the puppeteers' input helped and enriched this process very much.

Depending on the activities of the given day, I will indicate work-or-decision making processes in the following fields:

- * DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION (Puppet heads, costumes, stage, props and scenery, lighting).
- * REHEARSING (Voice-acting, body-and puppet movements, music, technical adjustments).
- * DIRECTING
- * INPUT AND EVALUATION

June 13

DESIGN AND

CONSTRUCTION: All five puppet heads sculpted, ANANSE's and TURKEY's body roughly finished (Fig. 38, 39).

Discussed concept of open stage with puppeteers (Fig. 29).

REHEARSING: First reading and then casting of characters. Difficult to find a character voice right away. Line readings too fast, was slowed down somewhat by holding puppet heads in hand while reading.

Discussed live music ideas, using simple percussion instruments which would be characteristic for each puppet, to underline the spoken words and to connect scenes, cover exits and entrances.

DIRECTING: Had to make the decision for character casting. Chose Donna for ANANSE, Kasi for TURKEY and GOAT (her voice-acting is so versatile), David for the LION and myself for the WART HOG.

Explained my design concept to the puppeteers, showing them sketches (Fig. 7, 12, 16, 20, 26, 29). Pointed out that simplicity should be a very important principle of the basic design concept.

INPUT AND

EVALUATION: Puppeteers liked design concept, agreed on simple, stylized movements, cutting down all unnecessary body construction details, proposing that puppets should handle all their props either directly with the puppeteer's hand (for ANANSE) or with the puppet's movable mouth.

June 16

DESIGN AND

CONSTRUCTION: Improvisational stage made from 18" cubes, 8' board and 2 side screens for entrances and exits.

Finished all the celastic work on the bodies of ANANSE and the TURKEY, covered two squashed plastic milk bottles with celastic to make the rock.

Puppeteers covered puppet heads with gesso.

REHEARSING: Listened to African drum and vocal music on records. Selection of instrument for puppeteer-puppet unit:
LION- hand drum,
ANANSE - wood block,
GOAT - sleigh bells sewn to ribbon to wear on wrist,
WART HOG - couldn't find an instrument that sounded "raspy" enough. I decide to just play the wooden xylophone for the introduction music and forget

Found it very difficult to find a syncopated rhythm which would include all the instruments. Everybody is a little shy. Starting with the drum we wanted to bring in one instrument after the other, building up in volume and intensity. Finally David found a good basic rhythm on hand drum which we decided could be used whenever the animals got ready to enter, either alone or in a group, using it as the basic rhythmical theme throughout the play.

INPUT AND

EVALUATION:

While trying to find a definite movement to go with the drum rhythm in the entrance scene, Kasi suggested to choreograph very stylized dance-like movements. We watched in turn, then decided that this type of movement went very well with the stylized design of the puppet heads and made us realize that we needed to see which individual movements could be created by the proposed soft costumes of the three animals, before we could go on blocking.

I was very glad that we had overcome the initial shyness and were now free to use our imagination to improvise with sounds and movements.

I realized how difficult it was going to be for me to play as well as direct at the same time.

We all decided to learn the lines for the first scene.

June 15

DESIGN AND

CONSTRUCTION: I made preliminary costume for LION from old sheet. Used a coat hanger to shape the costume. Gives good expressive movements (tried moving the puppet in front of the tall mirror).

INPUT AND

EVALUATION: Faculty sponsor Allan Stevens looked at puppet heads and drawings for the costumes and stage designs. Agreed with basic design concept. Suggested to look into possibility of using leaf cut-outs to put in front of the spot lights. Suggested to play with different color gels.

June 16

DESIGN AND

CONSTRUCTION: Bought wood for stage construction. Reconsidered to design arms for big animals' costumes, in order to give puppeteer the choice to handle props through costume's sleeve.

REHEARSING: Rehearsed outdoors in backyard (had a natural tree as a kola tree).

Good, spacious feeling.

Used newly bought wood for improvised stage.

Tried out LION's preliminary costume. Turned out to be effective in its movements.

Questions of how to choreograph the puppeteers' movements:

should we use each other's body to support a puppet at times?

How should we pass each other without covering the other puppeteer's puppet?

Could we emphasize some dramatic puppet movement by underlining it with our own body movement?

DIRECTING: I decide to concentrate on the genral line and movement blocking of the first scene and the second scene, omitting technical details such as handling props or giving TURKEY a good walking movement.

INPUT AND

EVALUATION: I find myself losing concentration when I have to play my character because I am constantly thinking about the the general choreography of all the characters; I always ponder about different or ways of blocking.

I tend to interrupt quite often to review and evaluate together with the puppeteers what we had done so far.

June 21

DESIGN AND

CONSTRUCTION: David and I try to figure out a practical way to support the play board without making it clumsy for transportation. Kasi and Donna work on preliminary costumes (made from sheets) for GOAT and WART HOG. I want to be sure that the costumes move well on the puppets before spending time and money on the final construction of the puppet body. I will use the sheet costumes as patterns for the real costumes.

DIRECTING: I feel under great pressure to get all my blocking done on paper.

INPUT AND

EVALUATION:

I feel that the time pressure really gets on my nerves. I wish I had an extra two weeks time. I also feel - still - very insecure about my lines. I will have to learn to separate my acting from directing and concentrate on concentration when I am performing.

June 22

DESIGN AND

CONSTRUCTION: Experimented with colors the night before, draping different colored and textured fabrics over preliminary costumes.

David makes hinged supports for the play board. Don't hold up. David's assignment: a sturdier stage construction which still could be easily transported.

REHEARSING:

Very intensive 3 hour rehearsal. We blocked all the scenes. We found more and more movement variations for ANANSE. Kasi and Donna follow my joking remark just not to attempt to give TURKEY and ANANSE a natural walk but rather let them slide when bringing them in using the two slanted side boards as ramps. We played with this idea and found it a

good solution for fast and distinct entrances and exits, adding a somewhat funny way of movement, very different from the rather uniform soft movements of the three big animals.

It helped very much to be able to play with the preliminary costumes on. We realized that we will have to build up some arm muscles to hold up the puppets, especially in scenes when either David or I had to hold up two puppets at a time.

Another difficulty had to be realized and overcome: all of us, except Donna, the ANANSE puppeteer, had to speak for our character, even when another puppeteer was holding and manipulating it. We decided that the most convincing way to do this, would be to bend over towards the talking character, so that the sound would come directly from behind the lip-synchronizing character.

INPUT AND

EVALUATION: I feel very relieved that we got all the rough blocking done. I feel now that we will get it together.

June 22-26

DESIGN AND

CONSTRUCTION: Working by myself, developing color schemes for the puppet costumes of the three animals. Goal: colors should be warm; head and body colors for all characters of the play, except TURKEY which coordinates head color with his tail feathers, should be monochromatic. Contrasts in color for characterisation and variation only in special "apron" ornaments. Made them from differently printed fabrics, braiding and appliqueing (Fig. 40, 41, 42).

Went to buy fabric for puppet and puppeteers' costumes. Had to consider color scheme of stage, puppets and background color for puppets. Should all the puppeteers' costumes have the same color? Talked it over with puppeteers and decided that I will use the same brown fabric for their costumes as well as for the cloth covers for flats and stage.

Painted puppet heads with Acrylic paints in monochromatic schemes (SLIDES 1-5).

June 27 and 28

DESIGN AND

CONSTRUCTION: Puppeteers stay for three hours. Very hot outside. Everybody agrees not to rehearse. David completes puppet stage construction, using big braces and removable bolts to hold the wooden supports in place. Uses hinges to attach supporting boards for ramps (Fig.30).

I cut out 3 boards for big animals' armature, puppeteers help attaching costumes to board.

June 29

DESIGN AND .

CONSTRUCTION: We were running line while finishing all the main sewing work of the three animal costumes.

Cut stylized leaf design from 3/4" plywood, printing samples for stage decor (Fig. 31).

Kasi stays over night, helps to sew on "aprons" on LION, WART HOG and GOAT costume.

June 30

REHEARSING: Allan Stevens came to watch the first rough run-through of the play. We played outdoors, using improvised props, natural kola tree.

INPUT AND

EVALUATION: Allan's notes :

- * Puppets need more space when playing in a group. Were too crowded.
- * Puppets' entrances were too vague, need a more definite "path".
- * Try to find a characteristic walk for each animal.
- * When turning GOAT, WART HOG and LION in SCENE II, expressing fear of OLD HAG, puppeteers should turn as a group, keeping their bodies touching each other.
- * Don't block each other out.
- * Puppeteers' costume should have long toga over wide pants (SLIDE 7).
- * Could rock be handled by other puppeteer?
- * WART HOG's lip-synchronisation not good.
- * Consider adding some animal noises for characterisation.
- * Music has to be worked out more smoothly.

- * The script's ending lines are weak. Try to strengthen them by a strong movement blocking.
- * When rehearsing , take each scene's rough blocking and refine it piece by piece.

I was very glad to have received so much valuable input. Helps us all very much.

July 1

REHEARSING: Went very slowly, very thoroughly paying attention to every detail of blocking. Paid special attention to voice-placement. Worked on space compositions, always keeping in mind that each large puppet needs a lot of space around it, not to look crowded. We also interspersed supporting drum beats into spoken lines to build up tension, whenever OLD HAG is mentioned. We tried to make realistic sounding animal noises, decided against it: too realistic, not fitting to stylized movements of puppets. Blocked to SCENE IV.

DESIGN AND

CONSTRUCTION: Made myself a "do-list":

print fabric for stage cover

stain stage

put velcro on edges of stage

sew costumes for puppeteers

design soft looking headdress for puppeteers' costume

make props (fish, corn, kola nuts, using stuffed
cloth shapes)

sew LION's mane from leather strips

sew stage cover

decide on decor for flat covers

July 2

REHEARSING: Blocked as carefully as day before to end of play.

Emphasis on puppeteers' body movements: has to be
coordinated with puppet's movements.

Difficult scene detail: in SCENE VI where I have to
manipulate the GOAT while Kasi manipulates TURKEY
and also says the lines for the GOAT (SLIDES 22, 21).

Similar difficulties encountered in same scene,
when I have to speak the lines for WART HOG,
while David is manipulating him (SLIDE 22).

DESIGN AND

CONSTRUCTION: Discussed style for puppeteers' headdress. It should cover hair, be soft in contour, should not have fringes (would be distracting when puppeteer was turning); should be easy to fix before every performance.

Looked at printed sample for stage cover and decided that the print would make everything look much too busy. Decided to leave the main cover plain, maybe add some decoration to the flat covers later.

We finished most of the work on the "do-list" We (Kasi and I) stayed up most of the night. I covered TURKEY's wooden tail feathers with fabric, repeating the same appliquee design as in the feather ruffles which cover his upper legs (SLIDES 5, 7 and 24).

July 5

REHEARSING: Setting everything up at Watkins Center for dress rehearsal. P.G. Puppeteers brought light equipment. Didn't have gels yet.

Some children and adults at the Center watched the run-through, giving us a little a feeling for an "audience".

Had to make some minor adjustments to the light equipment.

The room felt very nice. We are looking forward to have a real audience to-morrow.

V) PERFORMING THE SHOW (COMMENTS AND EVALUATION).

1) Introducing the show

Since the groups which were brought into the the Watkins Center varied from pre-schoolers to 6. grade students, also included groups with mentally retarded children and were combined with adults and children who just happen to have come to the Center, it was especially important to prepare this mixed audience for the show by pointing out that the story came from a foreign country: Africa, that the main character was ANANSI the spider, who likes to play tricks on other people or animals. I told them to watch for the way how he ^aplyed his tricks and how the other animals finally will get back at him.

Many children obviously had never seen a live puppet show before and thought they were about to see a movie.

Some small children were sometimes a little bit apprehensive about the strange looking costumes of the puppeteers. I could ease their mind quickly by explaining a little bit about the Bunraku playing style.

2) Music.

Having the drum starting to set up a steady syncopated rhythm, accompanied by the wood block, bells and finally

the wooden xylophone, the audience was prepared for the rhythmical entrance procession of the three animals in the first scene.

Having drum rhythms played as interludes between the scenes provided continuity and kept the children's attention focused on the stage.

Using individual drum beats to enforce an important line or using intense, fast drum beats when OLD HAG was mentioned seemed to have enhanced the emotional impact of the spoken word.

3) Puppets' and puppeteers' movements.

All puppeteers were visible behind their puppets throughout the play. Care had to be taken that puppets were not unnecessarily blocked when entering or going out. Puppeteers had to concentrate on their meaningful body movements as well as on focusing and manipulating the puppets. Creating this puppeteer-puppet unit was difficult in the beginning. However; after we got used to thinking of the puppet's movements as an extension of our own movements, we enjoyed playing very much. Very important were space relationships (grouping, heights of puppets and puppeteer's height) and a characteristic rhythmical movement flow linked to the rhythms of the spoken lines and the drum beats.

4) Audience response.

Watching the audience from time to time during the performance I could convince myself that the puppeteers' visibility did not distract the audience's attention away from the puppet's action. The audience seemed to accept puppet and puppeteer as a unit. Being so close to the audience the puppeteer could register immediately any feedback from the audience. This provided a new challenge and experience for us puppeteers at every performance.

Especially rewarding were the responses from the groups with mentally retarded or handicapped children. I believe that the size of the puppets and the direct manipulation method contributed to this successful communication.

5) Question and answer period after the show.

Rounding up the show with a question and answer period further enhanced the understanding of the plot and also made the children aware of some of the design and construction features of the puppet show.

Typical questions children asked after the show fell into two categories: a) referring to the content and b) referring to design and manipulation of puppets.

- a) * WHO WAS OLD HAG?
* WHERE WAS OLD HAG?
* WAS OLD HAG REAL?
* HOW COME, SOMEBODY COULD GET SCARED OF SOMETHING HE
DIDN'T EVEN BELIEVE IN?
- b) * HOW DID YOU MAKE THE PUPPETS?
* HOW DO YOU MOVE THE PUPPETS?
* IS THE ROCK HEAVY?
* WHERE IS THE LION'S TAIL?
* WHY ARE YOU WEARING THOSE COSTUMES?

Comments to a):

Responding to the a) questions I tried first to let the other children in the audience find the answers. In most cases the younger children were the ones who hadn't fully understood the 3-step plotting of ANANSE's trick:

first he had to convince the animals that there really was something like OLD HAG who demanded a certain code of behavior.

Second: he had to provoke the animals to say something that would break this code of behavior, rousing the fury of OLD HAG.

Third: acting as a mediator between OLD HAG and the animals he accepts their goods as an appeasement, thus serving, of course, his own purpose.

Somehow these young children were convinced - identifying with the three animals - that OLD HAG was real and expected her to appear any minute. Monsters can be very real to young children. Maybe they really wish to see the monster in order to be able to deal with it better, maybe even hoping to conquer it; and where would be a better place than at a puppet theatre to have an opportunity to be confronted with one?

Thus they might have heard TURKEY explain to the three animals that OLD HAG was really just dreamed up by ANANSE, but their emotional expectations didn't allow any rational explanations. The result was that the line of the plot was missed or not understood or just not accepted.

Older children didn't seem to be so pre-occupied with OLD HAG. The question, "HOW COME THAT SOMEBODY COULD GET SCARFD OF SOMETHING HE DIDN'T EVEN BELIEVE IN?" of course was referring to the last scene where ANANSE suddenly loses his cool, arrogant characteristics and with that all the goods and all the respect which he had taken from the three animals. Is ANANSE's sudden change convincing?

While TURKEY, LION, WART HOG and GOAT once introduced in the first scene with certain type-cast characteristical features keep these features throughout the play, ANANSE is the only character who changes from a smart and tricky character into a trembling terrified coward.

Maybe the boy who asked the question wasn't really so surprised about the fact that ANANSE did reveal - just for a short weak moment - another contrasting character feature; but I rather suspect it was the fact that we were not prepared by any clues in the previous scenes for this sudden change. In answering the boy's question I tried to make the point that most people indeed could become scared of something they would never have thought they believed, touching possibly the underlying moral of the story: people often just don't know what powerful irrational ideas might be sleeping way back in our minds.

Responding to the b) questions I would ask one character at a time to come back on stage where either I or the puppeteer would explain

- * the construction of the puppet and the characteristic movement of the puppet character,
- * design features of puppets and/or puppet stage,
- * the puppet-puppeteer relationship,

or we would enter into a discussion about how realistic a puppet design had to be to become an effective puppet. (This discussion was brought on by a little boy's question about the LION's tail).'

6) Playing outdoors.

Alice Ferguson Amphitheater in Accokeek:

Playing at night in an open stage space with a fine natural surrounding of big old trees and for an audience that I knew well was a very rewarding experience. Combining natural elements of the outdoor stage setting with the artistic elements of the play (music, language, puppets), gave performing puppeteers and participating audience a special sense of fulfillment.

Wolf Trap Farm :

Playing to about 300 people at noon time (without lights) in the "Little Theatre-in-the-Woods" we lost some of the intimate atmosphere which we had experienced with the other performances. Although there was an almost continuous moving about by people just wandering in from the other activities of the festival, the seated part of the audience seemed to have enjoyed the show and responded very well.

7) Final notes.

Throughout the four weeks of performances I felt a new challenge with every show to improve my performing skills. Since I was the least experienced performer of all the puppeteers, I felt that I gained a lot from their advise and examples.

My special difficulty was the lip-synchronisation for the hand-in-mouth puppets (WART HOG being quite heavy and GOAT having to be played "dry" since Kasi spoke the lines for her). I also found it hard to strike the right balance of projecting just enough energy into my puppet while at the same time maintaining expressive and energetic movements of my own body.

Designing, constructing, rehearsing-directing and finally performing this show was a very complex and concentrated project, touching many different facets of artistic fields. Intensive Designing, constructing or blocking work by myself was combined with rehearsing and performing with the other puppeteers, giving me opportunity to to test my design and performance skills. Supporting experienced puppeteers and good young audiences gave me immediate feed-back, stimulating my enthusiasm for this and future puppetry projects.

LIST OF PRODUCTION ELEMENTS

PUPPETS

ANANSI

LION

WART HOG

GOAT

TURKEY

PROPS

ROCK

STRING OF FISH

CORN

KOLA NUTS IN BASKET

SCENERY

KOLA TREE

STAGE

2 PLAY BOARD SECTIONS

2 RAMP SECTIONS

3 SUPPORTING BOARDS

2 FLATS

CLOTH COVERS FOR STAGE AND FLATS

INSTRUMENTS

WOODEN ALTO XYLOPHONE

2 HAND DRUMS

WOOD BLOCK

SLEIGH BELLS

LIGHTING

FRONT LIGHTING: 4 SPOTLIGHTS(COFFEE CANS)HUNG FROM CEILING

2 WITH PINK GELS

2 WITH GREY GELS

UPSTAGE LIGHTING: 2 POLES, ONE ON EACH SIDE OF STAGE FRONT:

1 POLE WITH 2 PINK SPOT LIGHTS

1 POLE WITH 2 GREY SPOT LIGHTS

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SCRIPT AND STAGE DIRECTIONS AS USED IN

PUPPET PLAY

"ANANSE'S TRICK DOES DOUBLE WORK"

TAKEN FROM THE BOOK

"PLAYS FROM AFRICAN FOLK TALES"

BY CAROL KORTY

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, NEW YORK

ILLUSTRATED WITH 27 COLOR SLIDES

PHOTOGRAPHED BY

STEVE AMBRAMOWITZ

DESIGN, PRODUCTION AND DIRECTION:

DIETLINDE HIBBEN

CHARACTERS: ANANSE THE SPIDER	(SLIDE 1)	PLAYED BY : DONNA HARRIS
LION	(SLIDE 2)	PLAYED BY : DAVID WISNIEVSKI
WART HOG	(SLIDE 3)	PLAYED BY : DIETLINDE HIBBEN
GOAT	(SLIDE 4)	PLAYED BY : KASI CAMPBELL
TURKEY	(SLIDE 5)	PLAYED BY : KASI CAMPBELL

PROPS: ROCK

STRING OF FISH

BAG OF CORN

KOLA NUTS IN BASKET

SCENERY: KOLA TREE

INSTRUMENTS: WOODEN ALTO XYLOPHONE

TWO HAND DRUMS


WOOD BLOCK

SLEIGH BELLS

PRODUCTION NOTES

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The original text was slightly modified and divided into seven different scenes, all connected by repeated drum rhythm theme. The original stage directions were designed for life actors and had to be adapted for the puppeteers, using simplified Bunraku- style puppets.

The introduction music starts with a simple drum rhythm: 

This rhythm, repeated throughout the play, is syncopated by wood block rhythm in 3/4 time.

This is followed by sleigh bells and finally by wood xylophone chords:



SCENE I

Basic drum rhythm starts, lights are brought in, wood block joins drum, followed by bells and wood xylophone. GOAT, WART HOG and LION, carrying their goods in their mouth, enter from stage left, walking in an up-and-down motion to the drum rhythm, turn full front at upstage center, walk to downstage play board, WART HOG moving up, when other two animals move down; sharp beat on wood block indicates point, when animals put down their goods on the play board and when ANANSE is sliding in on left ramp, landing with a thump. All music stops, the animals make a $\frac{1}{2}$ turn towards him. (SLIDE 6)

A: HELLO, LION!

L: HELLO, ANANSE!

Each time ANANSE greets an animal, he steps forward, cocks his head, says his line, then steps back.

A: HELLO, GOAT!

G: HELLO, ANANSE.

WART HOG steps forward to play board, looks at ANANSE, ANANSE looks him over, greets him hesitantly.

A: HELLO, WARTHOG.

WH: HELLO, MR. SPIDER.

A: OFF TO MARKET?

G: YES, COME ALONG WITH US. I AM
GOING TO SELL MY KOLA NUTS.

A: MAYBE I WILL.

ANANSE steps forward, looking over the goods.
After each remark concerning one of the goods
the respective animal steps forward, anxiously.

THOSE ARE BEAUTIFUL FISH YOU HAVE,

LION.

L: JUST CAUGHT THEM THIS MORNING.

A: AAH, YOU HAVE GOT CORN IN YOUR BAG,

WART HOG.

WH: THAT'S RIGHT. MY WHOLE FIELD IS

RIPE NOW.

A: WELL, LET'S GO.

Moves left. WART HOG moves left after ANANSE.

WH: WAIT A MINUTE, DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING

TO SELL?

A: NO. WHAT DOES THAT MATTER? I'LL

JUST COME ALONG WITH YOU.

WH: OH NO YOU DON'T. NOW I KNOW WHY

YOU ARE SO INTERESTED IN WHAT WE

HAVE.

WART HOG steps back. LION steps forward.

L: YES THE LAST TIME YOU CAME ALONG,
I LOST EVERYTHING I I BROUGHT WITH
ME.

G: THAT'S RIGHT. NO MORE OF YOUR
TRICKS, ANANSE.

WH: LET'S GO.

All animals pick up their goods simultaneously, LION starts drum rhythm, animals start walking towards left, WART HOG steps forward, puts down his corn. Drum rhythm continues softly, animals move with rhythm in place.

WH: I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU TRICK
ME AGAIN. IF YOU WANT TO HAVE
SOME GOODS, YOU ARE GOING TO
HAVE TO WORK FOR THEM.

WART HOG picks up corn. steps back in line with other animals.

A: WORK! YOU HAVE TO BE STUPID
TO WORK!

LION rushes forward towards ANANSE, in a threatening low position. His drum rhythm stopped.

L: VERY WELL. BUT DON'T EXPECT
TO COME WITH US.

LION starts his drum rhythm again, all three animals proceed to exit left, moving up and down with rhythm, then make left turn and start to cross up stage towards right. GOAT goes ahead, LION and WART HOG stop for their line, then exit right.

A: THERE ARE EASIER WAYS THAN
WORKING. I'LL USE MY HEAD.

L,WH: YOU DO IT YOUR WAY. WE'LL DO
IT OURS.

SCENE II

TURKEYEY enters by sliding in on right ramp.
Puppeteers for TURKEY and ANANSE stand back to
back. (SLIDE 7)

A: I'LL DO IT MY WAY, AND ALL
OF YOU WILL HELP ME, TOO.

T: HE IS UP TO HIS TRICKS AGAIN.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS. BUT
I BETTER WARN THE OTHERS.

TURKEY slides out quickly, drum rhythm starts
up, all three animals cross upstage towards left,
make a sharp right turn in unison, cross upstage
towards right, LION lagging behind. He stops
his drum when called by ANANSE, steps towards
play board.

A: LION, LION, WAIT!

L: WELL, WHAT IS IT NOW, ANANSE?

A: THERE IS SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT
I HAVE TO TELL YOU. I DIDN'T
WANT TO SAY IT IN FRONT OF THE
OTHERS.

(SLIDE 8)

BUT YOU ARE LION, AND YOU SHOULD
KNOW.

L: YES, OF COURSE, WHAT IS IT?

Second hand drum behind right side flat is being played by one of the puppeteers, giving short staccato beats according to indicating sign =V.

A: THE REASON I DON'T WANT TO GO TO MARKET ALONE.....IS THAT I AM AFRAID.

L: WHAT IS THERE TO BE AFRAID OF?

A: SOMETHING TERRIBLE. V LISTEN. V LAST NIGHT I HAD A DREAM ABOUT OLD HAG. VVVVVV.

(SLIDE 9)

L: OLD HAG?!

LION crosses in back of ANANSE to right side, lowering his height in fear.

A: SHH. YES, OLD HAG. SHE CAME TO ME IN MY DREAM AND SAID V "ANANSE, I AM GOING TO COME AND BRING TROUBLE TO EVERYONE IN THE DISTRICT. VVVVVVVVVVVV

ANANSE puppet's movements are intense. He leans in "Eiffel Tower" fashion from one side to the other.

L: WHY?

A: BECAUSE EVERYONE HERE KEEPS SAYING BAD THINGS ABOUT EACH OTHER.

L: NO...

A: BUT WE DO....DIDN'T I JUST
CALL ALL OF YOU STUPID FOR
WORKING?

L: YES.

A: YOU SEE? OLD HAG IS SURE TO
GET US. VVVVVVVVVVVVVVV

L: YOU ARE RIGHT. OH, NO!

LION crosses back to left side of ANANSE.

A: DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD WARN
THE OTHERS?

L: OF COURSE, WE SHOULD WARN THEM.

A: THEY'LL NEVER LISTEN TO ME.

LION draws himself up high, stepping back
upstage.

L: OH, THEY'LL LISTEN TO ME.
I'LL CALL THEM.

LION roars.GOAT and WART HOG come in from right,
their bodies lower than LION'S.
(SLIDE 10)

WH: WHAT IS IT?

L: COME AND LISTEN.

G: QUICK, QUICK, WHAT'S THE MATTER?

L: ANANSE HAD A DREAM.....

GOAT and WART HOG look at each other.

WH,G: A DREAM?

A: A DREAM ABOUT OLD HAG. VVVVVVVVGOAT and WART HOG's puppeteer. standing side to side with LION's puppeteer turn a full 360 degree circle in place, crying in panic.

A: SHE CAME TO ME IN THE DREAM...

V

ALL step forward one step in unison.

ALL: AYE..VV

A: AND SHE LET OUT A CRY, "YAH!" VV ALL step one step back.

ALL: YEE...

A: AND SHE SAID, "EVERYBODY IN THIS
DISTRICT TALKS TOO MUCH ABOUT EACH
OTHER...."

ALL nod .

ALL: YES, YES.

A: SAYS BAD THINGS ABOUT EACH OTHER. ALL nod in recognition of the truth.

ALL: OH, YES...

A: SHE SAID, "IF THIS DOES NOT STOP.." ALL step forward, eager to hear more, holding in their breath.

ALL: HAH. YES.

A: "IF THIS DOES NOT STOP, ANANSE,
I WILL COME TO YOU..." VV

ALL step forward one step .

ALL: AH..

A: "...AND I WILL FIND OUT WHO IT
IS..." VV

ALL step back.

ALL: AH..

Higher pitch.

A: "...AND I WILL BRING TROUBLE FOR
EVERYONE!" VVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVV

ALL turn in unison as before, crying. (SLIDE 11)

ALL: OH.....

TURKEY enters from right, sliding down ramp, landing with a thump, accentuating his first line.

T: WHAT IS IT? WHY ARE YOU WAILING?

G: SHE IS COMING.

L: OLD HAG IS COMING.

WH: COMING TO BRING TROBLE TO THE DISTRICT. ALL turn in unison as before, crying.

T: STOP. CAN'T WE DO SOMETHING?

CAN'T WE DO SOMETHING?

A: PSSS...STOP TALKING ABOUT EACH

OTHER.

L: WE CAN ALL STOP TALKING ABOUT EACH

OTHER. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

T: WAIT A MINUTE. SOMETHING IS VERY ODD.

AND I JUST HEARD ANANSE....

L: DO NOT LET OLD HAG HEAR YOU SAY

ONE BAD THING ABOUT EACH OTHER

AGAIN.

T: BUT...

L: NOW EVERYBODY GO ABOUT HIS

BUSINESS!

WH: WE'LL BE VERY CAREFUL.

G: NOT A WORD.

ALL stop and look at each other.(SLIDE 12)

ALL look around and end up focusing on LION. LION looks a bit helpless, trying to find an answer, he finally notices that ANANSE is trying to prompt him. He leans over towards ANANSE.

LION raises himself up.

ALL nod. TURKEY jumps forward on play board, making a clacking sound with his wooden legs.

LION rushes forward towards TURKEY in a low position. (SLIDE 13)

TURKEY stomps his feet.

WART HOG leans over towards TURKEY. GOAT does the same for her line, then both follow LION, who is starting up his drum rhythm, moving to stage left, then making a left turn, to cross upstage, exit. right.

A: SHHHH !

TURKEY turns to audience.

T: HOPE IT WORKS.

TURKEY slides out right.

SCENE III

A: IT WILL WORK FOR ME! GOOD START.
THOSE SILLIES ARE REALLY SCARED.
LET'S SEE. THIS ROCK SHOULD WORK.
I AM READY.

WH: I DON'T THINK I'LL GO TO MARKET
TODAY. I'M NOT REALLY SCARED. BUT
IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE A GOOD DAY
TO GO.

ANANSE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

A: I'M TRYING TO MOVE THIS ROCK.

WH: WHY ARE YOU MOVING IT, ANANSE?

A: I DECIDED YOU WERE RIGHT, WART HOG,
ABOUT WORKING. IT WOULD BE NICE TO
HAVE SOME CORN. I'M GOING TO RAISE
SOME.

WH: GOOD FOR YOU, ANANSE.

ANANSE jumps up from sitting position, then looks around for something that could help him to trick the animals. The rock had been placed under the right side of the play board, is now lifted by ANANSE onto the board.(SLIDE 14)
WART HOG has to put his corn in his mouth. Drum rhythm from back stage, while WART HOG enters from right with heavy stamping walk. He puts down his corn, looking scared, his body is low, his neck sunken. After his first lines he notices ANANSE, picks up his corn, walking sidewise to stage center, then forward to the left of ANANSE, where he puts down his corn again, looks at ANANSE, and walking sidewise to the back of ANANSE's puppeteer, places himself on top of puppeteer, saying the second lines. ANANSE had all this time busied himself with the rock, trying to lift it. Drum rhythm stops just before WART HOG lands on puppeteer. (SLIDE 15)

WART HOG steps to left of ANANSE. (SLIDE 16)

WART HOG watches ANANSE's efforts, still being only about 3/4 his height.

A: I JUST HAVE TO GET THIS ROCK
OVER A LITTLE FARTHER.

WART HOG steps closer to watch.

WH: BUT WHY ARE YOU MOVING THIS ROCK,
ANANSE?

A: CAREFUL, DON'T STEP THERE! THAT'S
WHERE I HAVE PLANTED THE CORN.
CAN YOU GIVE ME A HAND WITH THIS
ROCK?

WH: I'LL BE GLAD TO HELP.

I'VE HAD EXPERIENCE RAISING CORN
ALL MY LIFE.

BOTH move rock to left, then stop. Lots
of grunting noises.
(SLIDE 17)

A: YES, I KNOW. OVER THIS WAY A
LITTLE MORE. GOOD.

WART HOG looks at the rock, raises himself
up to full height.

WH: ANANSE, YOU JUST SAID YOU PLAN-
TED CORN ON THIS SPOT.

A: THAT'S RIGHT.

WH: AND YOU WANT IT TO GROW?

WART HOG very intense, coming closer to ANANSE with each line, moving entire body towards and away from ANANSE.

A: YES, OF COURSE.

WH: AND YOU PUT A ROCK ON TOP OF IT?

A: CERTAINLY, I DON'T ANYONE TO STEP ON IT.

WH: THAT'S THE DUMBEST THING I'VE EVER HEARD.

A: WHAT?

WH: YOU'RE STUPID! VV

A: SHHH. OH, NO. OLD HAG WILL GET YOU. VVVVVVVVVVVV

Drum beats keep up from back stage.

WH: OH! WHAT DID I SAY! PLEASE DON'T LET HER KNOW. DON'T TELL HER.

A: SHE PROBABLY HEARD IT ALREADY.

WH: I DIDN'T MEAN TO SAY IT. PLEASE HELP ME!

A: SHE'LL BE PRETTY MAD. MAYBE
YOU COULD GIVE HER SOMETHING.

WH: YES, YES. I'LL GIVE HER SOME-
THING. SOMETHING...SOMETHING...
SOMETHING...BUT, WHAT?

A: HMMMMMMM...YOUR CORN?

WH: YES, I'LL GIVE YOU SOME CORN
TO GIVE HER.

A: BUT...I HAVE NO TIME. I AM
TOO BUSY RAISING MY OWN CORN.

WH: ANANSE, LISTEN. YOU CAN HAVE
ALL OF MY CORN.

A: WELL, ALL RIGHT. SINCE YOU ARE
AN OLD FRIEND, I'LL HELP YOU
OUT. GIVE IT TO ME.

WH: OH, THANK YOU SO MUCH, ANANSE.
I'M GOING HOME. I CAN'T MAKE IT
TO MARKET TODAY. I'M JUST NOT UP TO
IT.

WART HOG shrinks in size, just moving his head, he is looking around for something. While he is looking ANANSE moves closer to him, pointing to the corn.

Picks up corn.

He stretches out his arm, holding the corn.

WART HOG places corn on right side of play board.

A: GOOD-BYE, WART HOG.

WH: THANK YOU VERY MUCH, ANANSE.

A: DON'T MENTION IT.

I NEVER KNEW GROWING CORN COULD
BE SO EASY.

He backs up to upstage, then exits right
with heavy steps, while drum rhythm is starting
up again backstage.
ANANSE jumps up, laughs, handles the corn.

SCENE IV

LION walking in with fish in his mouth from right, humming to himself. Drum rhythm is played backstage.
ANANSE is struggling with the rock, trying to pick it up.

L: HUMPH. HUMPH.... WHY, ANANSE, WHAT
ARE YOU DOING HERE?
ANANSE!

ANANSE continues his struggle.

A: OH, I DIDN'T NOTICE YOU, LION. YOU'RE
JUST THE ONE I WANT TO SEE. I'M
GOING FISHING. COULD YOU GIVE ME
A HAND WITH THIS?

L: YES, OF COURSE, I COULD.
HERE, LET ME HELP YOU WITH THAT
ROCK.

LION puts fish on play board.

A: YES, THANK YOU.HELP ME GET IT
ON MY SHOULDER.
IF YOU GET UNDER IT AND LET ME
TURN AROUND.....

ANANSE bends down, sticks one foot into handle of the rock, LION lowers himself, trying to make himself useful, but is very clumsy.

L: YES, I WAS JUST GOING TO SAY, IF

LION tries to prop up the rock with his head.The rock slips and falls , they try again. ANANSE's puppeteer holds it up on his shoulder
(SLIDES 18 and 19)

I GET UNDER IT, THEN YOU CAN
TURN AROUND...

A: AND WE'LL GET IT ON MY SHOULDER.

L: YES, RIGHT ON YOUR SHOULDER.

ANANSE starts to move to the right.

A: THAT'S GOOD. THANK YOU FRIEND.
NOW WISH ME LUCK.

L: WHY WISH YOU LUCK?

A: BECAUSE I AM OFF TO GO FISHING.

LION takes a few seconds to realize what
ANANSE just said.

L: WAIT A MINUTE! IF YOU ARE OFF TO
GO FISHING, WHY ARE YOU TAKING
THAT ROCK?

A: I NEED THE ROCK TO CATCH THE FISH.

L: CATCH FISH WITH A ROCK?

A: YES.

ANANSE keeps going, LION rushes after him.

L: NO ONE EVER FISHES WITH A ROCK!

A: THAT'S JUST THE POINT! NO ONE
EVER USES A ROCK, SO THE FISH
WON'T EXPECT IT. I'LL FOOL THEM.

L: IMPOSSIBLE.

A: I'LL SNEAK UP TO THE EDGE OF
THE WATER....

ANANSE mimes as he talks, LION watches him
with disbelief. Exchange of following lines
very fast and intense.

L: ANANSE, YOU NEED A FISH HOOK...

A: ...AND I'LL WATCH FOR ONE TO SWIM
BY.....

L: ...OR A FISH NET.

A: ...AND THEN I'LL PRETEND TO LOOK
THE OTHER WAY...

L: LISTEN TO ME! I KNOW HOW TO DO IT!

A:AND I'LL DROP THIS ROCK ON HIS
HEAD! CRRRRASH! V

Drum emphasizes dropping of the rock with
strong beat. ANANSE stands up very proudly
after he has dropped the rock on the play
board. LION raises up to his full height,
is very angry.

L: THAT WILL NEVER WORK, YOU FOOL! V

A: WHAT! V

L: YOU'RE A FOOL. A STUPID, STUBBORN
FOOL! VVVV

A: OH, NO....OLD HAG! VVVVVVVVVV

L: OLD HAG!

Drum beats are kept up in somewhat lower
volume until end of next three line.

A: WHY DID YOU SAY THAT? NOW SHE'LL
COME AND BRING TROUBLE.

L: WHAT HAVE I DONE?

LION shrinks in size.

DON'T TELL HER, ANNASE. PLEASE,
DON'T TELL HER!

A: SHE IS GOING TO ASK.

L: PLEASE HELP ME, FRIEND

A: MAYBE YOU COULD GIVE HER SOME-
THING.

L: OF COURSE, OF COURSE, THAT'S WHAT
I WILL DO.....BUT....I DON'T
HAVE ANYTHING.

LION raises himself up again.

A: WHAT ABOUT THESE FISH?

ANANSE pointing to the fish.

L: OF COURSE, PLEASE GIVE HER A FISH.

A: WELL, IT'S A RISK FOR ME.

L: HERE, TAKE THE REST FOR YOURSELF.

A: ALL RIGHT. SINCE YOU ARE LION, I
WILL DO YOU A FAVOR. JUST PUT THEM
OVER THERE WITH THE CORN.

LION puts fish with corn on play board.

L: THANK YOU, ANANSE.

Drum rhythm starts to play while LION
exits to left.

A: DON'T MENTION IT.

L: NO, I CERTAINLY WON'T.

A: GOOD-BYE, LION, GLAD I COULD HELP.

ANANSE jumps up with joy. He busies himself
with goods.

ONE DROP OF A ROCK CAUGHT A WHOLE

LOAD OF FISH! NOW I'LL FIND A BIG

BASKET TO CARRY EVERYTHING TO MARKET. Drum rhythm is heard back stage.

SCENE V

A: OH, BUT FIRST THE GOAT.

Goat enters from right. She doesn't carry her kola nuts. ANANSE returns to work on rock.

G: TURKEY!.....LION!....WART

Rushes in, looking for the others, finally sees ANANSE and bends down to his left to greet him.

HOG!...

OH, ANANSE, I AM GLAD TO FIND
SOMEONE!....HAVE YOU SEEN WART
HOG? HAVE YOU SEEN TURKEY? HAVE
YOU SEEN LION?

A: DON'T BOTHER ME, I'M BUSY.

G: OH, YES, OF COURSE. DON'T LET
ME BOTHER YOU.

ANANSE still struggles with the rock.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, ANANSE?

A: GETTING KOLA NUTS.

G: YOU'RE GETTING NUTS FROM THAT
ROCK?

Laughing, her shoulders are moving in an up and down movement.

A: OF COURSE NOT. I'M GOING TO GET
THEM FROM THAT TREE OVER THERE.

Points to kola tree.

G: OH, YES. YOU ARE GOING TO STAND
ON THE ROCK TO CLIMB THE TREE.

A: LOOK OUT!
ONE, TWO, THREE!

G: ANANSE, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

A: I'M GOING TO KNOCK THOSE NUTS OUT
OF THE TREE.

G: BUT, ANNASE, YOU HAVE TO CLIMB
THE TREE SO YOU CAN PICK THEM
OR SHAKE THEM DOWN.

A: I JUST HAVE TO THROW THIS ROCK
A LITTLE HIGHER.
LOOK OUT! V

G: ANANSE, YOU'D BETTER CLIMB THAT
TREE.

A: THIS IS EASIER.

ANASE picks up rock and swings it back and forth, lets it drop on play board. The thud of the dropping rock is enforced by a drum beat. When ANANSE swings the rock, the GOAT follows motions with her body.

GOAT is laughing.

ANANSE takes a few steps to the right, holding the rock on his left shoulder. He runs with it and then falls down. Drum beat.
(SLIDE 20)

Starts to pick up the rock again.

G: YOU THINK IT IS EASIER TO TAKE
THIS GREAT BIG ROCK AND STAND
UNDER THIS GREAT BIG TREE AND TRY
TO HIT THAT TINY....
LITTLE....
KOLA NUT UP THERE?

Laugh

Laugh

Laugh

A: MAYBE IF I RAN FIRST.

G: I USED TO THINK I WAS SILLY.

A: I THINK I HAVE TO RUN FASTER.

G: THIS IS THE SILLIEST THING
I'VE EVER SEEN.

A: ONCE MORE.

G: ANANSE, YOU ARE CRAZY! VV

Drum beats

A: WHAT? V

G: CRAZY, CRAZY, CRAZY !

GOAT laughing

A: OLD HAG! VVVVVVVVVVVVV

G: OH, NO!

A: I'M SORRY YOU SAID THAT, GOAT.

G: OH, HELP!

A: ALL RIGHT. WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR
ME?

G: WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

A: GIVE ME YOUR KOLA NUTS. WHERE
ARE THEY?

G: I HID THEM BACK ON THE ROAD.

A: GO GET THEM AND LEAVE THEM HERE
WITH MY OTHER THINGS. I HAVE TO
RUN HOME FOR A BASKET. I AM IN
A HURRY.

GOAT shrinks with fear.

GOAT runs in opposite directions.

She calms down, looks up at ANANSE.

GOAT becomes hectic again, looking for nuts.
Then, just before she says her line, she
pauses and just turns her head towards the
left.

GOAT exits left, ANANSE starts to run off
to the right, then stops at the goods. Drum
rhythm is starting up. WART HOG puppeteer
picks up kola nuts and the WART HOG puppet
and crosses with back to audience to left
exit while at the same time the TURKEY and
GOAT puppeteer crosses to right side of the
backstage, ready to pick up the TURKEY puppet.

SCENE VI

T: SAY, GOAT, WHERE ARE YOU GOING

SO FAST WITH THOSE NUTS?

G: QUICK, I HAVE TO GIVE THESE

KOLA NUTS TO ANANSE.

T: BUT ANANSE ISN'T HERE.

G: THAT'S ALL RIGHT. HE SAID TO JUST

LEAVE THEM WITH HIS OTHER GOODS.

L: WHERE IS ANANSE? HE WAS SUPPOSED

TO DO ME A FAVOR.

T: ANANSE ISN'T HERE.

L: BUT HIS GOODS ARE. HERE IS THE PILE.

T: WAIT A MINUTE. HOW COULD ANANSE SUD-

DENLY HAVE A PILE OF GOODS? HE

DIDN'T HAVE ANY THIS MORNING.

GOAT enters from left, carrying basket with kola nuts in her mouth. TURKEY enters from right; they both meet at play board center, TURKEY curiously looking into GOAT's basket. (SLIDE 21)

GOAT puts down her basket, puppeteer who manipulates TURKEY bends over towards GOAT and says her lines. GOAT pulls herself up to full height.

GOAT laughs.

LION and WART HOG, manipulated by LION's puppeteer, enter from left.

TURKEY looks at the pile of goods.(SLIDE 22)

LION, WART HOG and GOAT look at each other.

ALL: YEH!

LION turns to GOAT.

L: HOW DID HE GET THEM?

G: I DON'T KNOW. I JUST CAME
WITH MY KOLA NUTS, AND ALL
THESE OTHER THINGS WERE HERE.

WH: I JUST GAVE HIM MY LOAD OF
CORN, BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW HE
GOT THE OTHER THINGS.

L: THE ONLY THING I KNOW ABOUT IS
THE STRING OF FISH I GAVE HIM.

T: BUT THAT'S ALL THERE IS:
NUTS, CORN, FISH.....

ALL THESE THINGS CAME FROM YOU!

ALL stand in a line behind TURKEY.
Each animal looks at his/her thing,
when mentioned by TURKEY.

ALL turn to each other simultaneously.

ALL: WHY DID YOU?

G: OLD HAG.

GOAT stretches neck towards TURKEY for
her line, WART HOG does the same.

WH: YES, TO GIVE TO OLD HAG.

L: SO SHE WON'T HURT US.

T: BUT WHY GIVE THE THINGS TO ANANSE?

L: ANANSE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO SAW OLD HAG.

T: WAIT. YOU GAVE YOUR GOODS TO ANANSE TO

GIVE TO OLD HAG?

ALL nod.

AND ANANSE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO

HAS HEARD FROM OLD HAG?

G: HE DREAMED ABOUT HER.

T: HE DREAMED HER UP, IF YOU ASK ME!

ALL: OH, NO! HE TRICKED US! LET ME TAKE

MY THINGS BACK.

ALL move towards play board, trying to pick up their things. TURKIFY stops them.

T: WAIT. DON'T TAKE THEM BACK. LET'S

MAKE ANANSE GIVE THEM BACK.

ALL: BUT HOW?

T: I KNOW ANANSE. LET ME DO IT.

I HEAR HIM COMING. QUICK, HIDE

IN THE BUSHES.

HE cocks his head towards right, then turns back to animals.

ALL cock their heads simultaneously, then exit side by side as a group to the left.

SCENE VII

A: I COULN'T FIND A BASKET ANY-
WHERE. I'LL JUST HAVE TO CARRY
MY THINGS WITHOUT ONE.
BUT HERE IS TURKEY.
MAYBE I COULD TRICK HIM TOO.

TURKEY!...TURKEY!!

T: OH, HELLO, ANANSE. I DIDN'T NOTICE
YOU.

A: WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

T: INTO TOWN.

A: I'M TRYING TO MOVE THIS ROCK!

T: UM. HUM. WELL, SEE YOU LATER.

ANANSE slides in from the right. TURKEY has moved over to the left side of the play board, pretending not to notice ANANSE. ANANSE notices TURKEY after he has checked out his goods. He starts to get TURKEY's attention by working with the rock. TURKEY struts up and down the left ramp, not even acknowledging the rock. ANANSE picks up the rock, drops it, having the thumping noise enforced with a drum beat. TURKEY still does not pay attention. ANANSE picks up rock and carries it over to TURKEY, dropping it right next to TURKEY. TURKEY just turns his neck without turning his body, then walks away to the left. (SLIDE 23) ANANSE finally can't restrain himself any more. He jumps right next to TURKEY, addressing him. TURKEY stops, turns his neck slowly.

Then he continues walking. ANANSE follows him with the rock.

ANANSE lifts the rock a little, lets it thump. Lots of straining noises.

TURKEY just turns his head, then walks slowly up the ramp, the puppeteer lifting his legs one at a time. (SLIDE 24)

A: WAIT. COULD YOU HELP ME WITH
THIS ROCK?

TURKEY comes back, looks at the rock. (SLIDE 25)
Then turns around abruptly.

T: WELL, I'M GOING TO TOWN RIGHT
NOW.

A: WHY THE HURRY?

T: TO GET A HAIR CUT.

TURKEY makes his point by raising his neck.

A: TO GET A HAIR CUT?!

T: UM HUM.

A: BUT YOU HAVEN'T GOT ANY HAIR.

TURKEY just turns his neck to answer, then
walks on.

T: MAYBE SOME WILL GROW IF I HAVE
A HAIR CUT.

A: THAT WILL NEVER WORK. WHO EVER
HEARD OF SUCH A THING!

T: IT'S WORTH A TRY.

ANANSE laughing.

A: OH, YOU ARE CRAZY! VV

Drum beats

T: WHAT? VV

A: ABSOLUTELY CRAZY! VVVVVVVV

T: OLD HAG, ANANSE!

ANANSE is so caught up in his own story that now he believes it. He becomes more and more frantic, jumping, tilting his whole body, sitting down etc.

A: OH, NO!

T: SHE'LL GET YOU!

A: PLEASE DON'T TELL HER!

T: WHAT CAN I DO?

A: OH, HELP!

T: MABE YOU COULD GIVE HER SOMETHING.

A: YES, YES. I'D BETTER GIVE HER SOMETHING.....BUT....I DON'T HAVE A SINGLE THING TO GIVE.HER

T: WHAT ABOUT ALL THESE THINGS?

Pointing to the pile of goods.

A: OH, YES, I GUESS I COULD GIVE HER

LION, WART HOG and GOAT start coming in slow-

SOME OF THIS.

T: SHE IS GOING TO BE MAD.

HERE SHE COMES NOW!

A: I'LL GIVE HER EVERYTHING!

DON'T HURT ME, OLD HAG!

OLD HAG, PLEASE LET ME GIVE YOU

THIS CORN AND FISH AND.....

NUTS!

L: I'LL LET YOU GIVE ME MY FISH, ANANSE. LION picks up fish from play board.

WH: I'LL TAKE BACK MY CORN.

G: AND IF YOU INSIST, I'LL TAKE BACK

MY KOLA NUTS.

L: COME ON, LET'S GO TO MARKET.

A: ..TRICKED BY A TURKEY!!!..

T: DO YOU THINK, ANANSE LEARNED HIS
LESSON?

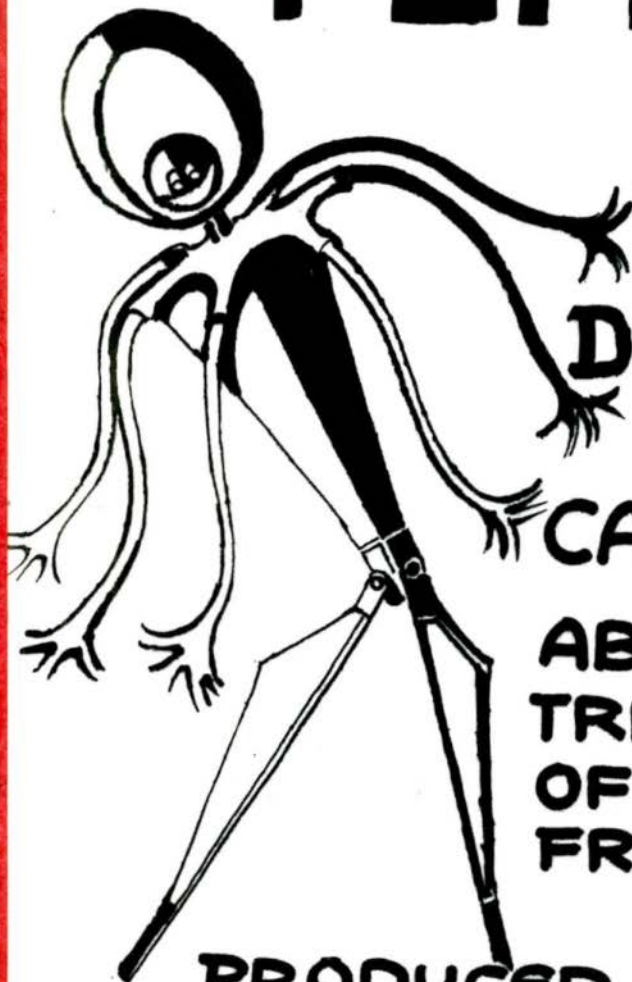
ly from the left in swaying motions, increasing their height as they approach center stage, leaning simultaneously over ANANSE. (SLIDE 26). ALL are roaring, pretending to be a monster-like figure. ANANSE believes that OLD HAG had come and keeps his back to them.

ALL stand right over ANANSE.

he turns around quickly and sees the three

WART HOG and GOAT, being manipulated by the WART HOG puppeteer, bend down simultaneously to pick up their goods. Drum rhythm for walking is started by LION, all three animals turn to left, walking in up-and-down motion to drum beats towards left exit, then make a right turn and cross the upstage, exit to right. ANANSE is furious having been fooled by TURKEY. He jumps up, picks up the rock and throws it towards TURKEY, then stomps off stage right. TURKEY looks calmly at rock, shakes his head, turns to the audience for his last line, then flies out laughing. (Puppeteer holds him up in the air). Lights dim down. then are brought up again for curtain call. (SLIDE 27)

PUPPET SHOW



**ANANSE'S TRICK
DOES DOUBLE WORK**

**CAROL KORTY'S PLAY
ABOUT ANANSE THE
TRICKSTER SPIDER
OF ASHANTI FOLKLORE
FROM GHANA**

**PRODUCED AND DIRECTED AS A
PUPPET PLAY BY DIETLINDE HIBBEN**