

Golden Thread Fairytale Players'

Magical Journeys

Nasrudin's Magnificent Journey to Samakand

The Girl Who Lost Her Smile

Princess in the Mirror

Education theatre performances
incorporating story, music and dance from the Middle East

*"Remember my friend,
One who has heaven in his heart is always well dressed!"*



Nasrudin's Magnificent Journey to Samarkand is a visually colorful performance with dynamic story-telling, dance and music. It is adapted from several folk tales centered around the comedic personage, Mulla Nasrudin or Nasrudin Hoja, a wise fool renowned in Central Asia, Turkey and Iran. Idris Shah's "The Pleasantries of the Incredible Mulla Nasrudin," "Disturber of the Peace" by Leonid Solovyov and "The Hungry Coat" by Demi are excellent examples of Nasrudin tales. Nasrudin's clever wisdom and propensity for exposing hypocrisy, frequently gets him into trouble. Audience members will be encouraged to reflect on the values highlighted in the performance and draw parallels to their own experiences. In this performance we follow Nasrudin's adventures as he travels through caravansaries in Konya, Damascus and Isfahan before he arrives at his destination on the ancient Silk Route. Will Nasrudin and his faithful donkey ever make it to Samarkand, the center of arts and crafts on the ancient Silk Road? There is only one way to find out!

Princess in the Mirror is an adaptation of a story found in the anthology "While Standing on One Foot" by Nina Jaffe and Steve Zeitlin. Three brothers compete to win the heart and hand of a princess. They are set on an adventurous quest, traveling through ancient lands to find the treasure that will please the princess the most. The princess must choose one of them, but which one? The story's plot turns on a dilemma, which audience members are encouraged to reflect on. Each member of the audience will have the chance to compare their own answer to the solution told by the sages.



The Girl Who Lost Her Smile is inspired by the traditional Iranian story telling style of Naghalli and visually rich performance values.



Adapted from a children's book of the same name by Karim Alrawi and inspired by a Rumi poem, the fable transports us to the ancient city of Baghdad where we find Jehan, a young girl, has lost her smile. Artists from around the world are brought to help restore the girl's smile through magic and entertainment. But the solution lies elsewhere as only those watching very closely will find out!

Golden Thread's Fairytale Players engage audiences through text, movement, folk music and dance, and also create language, geography and cultural connections to the Middle East. Reflective Practice questions are offered after the performances that discuss specific cultural traditions, locations, and characters for further understanding of the play. The performances frequently include audience participation and as an option, the Fairytale Players can incorporate a post-show participatory folk dance workshop or dramatic activities designed to foster creativity, imagination and impart basic theatre skills.



Magical Journeys, a costumed and fully-produced storytelling series, seeks to introduce new cultures through a variety of Middle Eastern legends and tales and presents a compact and economical alternative for smaller group presentations. A

variety of destinations are visited in successive journeys, over the course of a number of sessions, with two costumed storytellers as guides – music, dance, and puppetry are utilized in various tales along with audience participation. You are free to choose the locales of your choice – Iraq is represented in *The Girl Who Lost Her Smile*, *Princess in the Mirror* is set in ancient Israel, and *Nasrudin's Magnificent Journey to Samarkand* takes place in Turkey and Central Asia.

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Inspired by popular performance traditions in the Middle East (Hakawati, Ru hozi, Naghalli, Gharaghoz) the Fairytale Players employ epic story-telling, physical theatre and circus arts techniques in creating performances based on stories from the Middle East. The ensemble regularly trains in various theatre disciplines including traditional Middle Eastern performance styles and folk dance which inform the selection and development of the repertory of plays. The performances are designed to travel and are booked at schools, libraries, community and cultural centers, and festivals. Two formats are currently in use: *Magical Journeys* is a two-person, 30-minute program offered at a more affordable rate; full productions tend to run closer to an hour, involve more actors with live music and are offered at a higher rate. The performances end with reflective practice where major themes, characters, and locations are highlighted and discussed with the audience. Previous work by the Fairytale Players has been presented at the Asian Art Museum, Discovery Museum, La Peña Cultural Center, Islamic Cultural Center, the United States of Asian America Festival, San Francisco TheatreFest, and the Dia de los Niños Festival in San Francisco, as well as libraries in the Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco and San Mateo counties. Current repertory includes: *The Noruz Story*, *The Girl Who Lost Her Smile*, *The Princess and the Mirror*, and *Nasrudin's Magnificent Journey to Samarqand*.

Golden Thread

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