

Interested in Theatre?

Audition, volunteer, or earn credit (TA 215-219) while you build your resume!



build sets



build props



build a character

build costumes



build an audience



build connections!

*York
College
Theatre*

YORK COLLEGE IS **CU NY**

York College Theatre 2010 - 2011 Season

Istwa!

Adapted by Tom Marion & The Ensemble

Directed by Tom Marion
Asst. Direction by Kenyatta Thompson

Friday Oct. 22 @ 4 pm
Saturday Oct. 23 @ 8 pm
Sunday Oct. 24 @ 3 pm
Tuesday Oct. 26 @ Noon



York College Little Theatre
94-45 Guy R. Brewer Blvd.
Jamaica, NY 11451

YORK COLLEGE IS **CU NY**

For more information, please call 718.262.5375 or visit: www.york.cuny.edu

Please refrain from unwrapping candy or making other noises that may disturb other patrons.

The use of cameras and recorders in the theatre is prohibited.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the theatre.

Cellular phones, beepers and watch alarms should be turned off or set to non-audible mode.



Callaloo 11
Directed by Barbara Nickolich



The Tempest by William Shakespeare
Directed by Tom Marion



Oleanna by David Mamet
Directed by Timothy J. Amrhein



Speak Out by Tom Marion
Directed by Tom Marion



Anna in the Tropics by Nilo Cruz
Directed by Timothy J. Amrhein



No Exit by Jean-Paul Sartre
Directed by Sarah Schilling



94-45 Guy R. Brewer Blvd.
Little Theatre / May 6-15, 2011

YORK COLLEGE THEATRE
Department of Performing and Fine Arts
Timothy Amrhein, Chairman

In collaboration with

The CUNY Aviation Institute at York College
Dr. Robert Aceves

present

CVR

CHARLIE VICTOR ROME

created by

Robert Berger, Patrick Daniels, and Irving Gregory,

in collaboration with

**Michael Bruno, Audrey Crabtree, Justin Davila, Jim Grady, Dan Krumm, Peter O'Clair,
Julia Randall, Stuart Rudin, Darby Thompson, Oliver Wyman,
& Collective: Unconscious.**

Directed by **Tom Marion**

SCENIC DESIGN
David T. Jones

SOUND DESIGN
Jamie Mereness

LIGHTING DESIGN
Daniel Winter

PROJECTIONS
Jarrel Lynch

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER
***Jessica Pecharsky Morales**

SOUND ENGINEER
Paul Adams

TECHNICAL DIRECTION
Garth Belcon

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors & Stage Managers

York College
Department of Performing and Fine Arts

COMING EVENTS – FALL 2010

MUSIC

10/25 @ 7 p.m.

JAZZ AT THE CHAPEL: *The Texas Tenor - The Illinois Jacquet Story* (film),
Illinois Jacquet Performance Space

11/14 @ noon

York College Big Band @ York College Open House, Atrium

11/22 @ 7 p.m.

JAZZ AT THE CHAPEL w/ Lex Samu, Illinois Jacquet Performance Space

12/15 @ 8 p.m.

York College Big Band Fall Concert @ PAC

12/18 @ 8 p.m.

York College Blue Notes @ PAC

Also, check out the new website!

MUSIC @ YORK

ART

Open now:

The work of Nina Buxenbaum

Associate Professor of Art

Opening December 7th

York College Student Show

THEATRE

Our Lady of 121st Street

Presented by the York College Drama Club

Nov 4 @ Noon + 6 pm & Nov 5 @ 8 pm

Little Theatre, Performing Arts Center

Free Admission!

SPEECH COMMUNICATION/THEATRE ARTS MAJOR

I. Required Speech Communication and Theatre Arts Courses (12 Credits)

Speech Communication 182 (3 Credits)
Voice and Diction

Theatre Arts 210 (3 Credits)
History of Theatre

Theatre Arts 211 (3 Credits)
Basic Acting

Speech Communication 303 (3 Credits)
Ethics & The Freedom of Speech

II. **Speech Communication 490** (3 Credits)

Independent Research

or

Theatre Arts 490 (3 Credits)
Independent Research

III. **Speech Communication/Theatre Arts Electives** (15 Credits)

Students must concentrate in either Speech Communication or in Theatre Arts and complete at least twelve of their eighteen elective credits in the Concentration that she or he has declared.

(A total of 15 credits of SpeechComm/TA coursework must be at the 300-level or higher.)

NOTE: Although Speech Communication students may take as much Theatre Arts *practica* as they please, *no more than 6 credits of Theatre Arts practica* may be applied towards the fulfillment of the Speech Communication Concentration; however, Theatre Arts students *may apply 9 credits of Theatre Arts Practica* towards the fulfillment of the Theatre Arts Concentration. Theatre Arts *practica* courses currently include TA215-19.

*All SpeechComm/TA majors must take SPCH 101 as a Prereq for completion of the Major. Majors in Speech Communication/Theatre Arts must fulfill their General Education Requirements in a discipline other than their major.

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YORK COLLEGE IS CU NY

YORK COLLEGE PERFORMING AND FINE ARTS
DEPARTMENT

Kenneth Adams-Chair
Joycelyn Heywood - Administrative Assistant
CUNY Office Assistant - Angela Robinson
College Assistant - Maria Goris

SPEECH COMMUNICATION AND THEATRE ARTS

Prof. Como (Speech Communication Coordinator)
Assoc. Prof. Amrhein (Theatre Arts Coordinator)
Prof. Nickolich, Emerita
Sub. Asst. Prof. Marion
Sub. Lecturer Jones
Lecturer Corkery
Asst. Prof. Metcalf
Sub. Lecturer Heatherly
CLT Belcon
CLT Pecharsky

FINE ARTS

Asst. Prof. Buxenbaum (Coordinator)
Asst. Prof. Gillespie
Prof. Simkin

MUSIC

Assoc. Prof. Adams (Chair)
Prof. Ernst (Coordinator)
Lecturer Zlabinger
Sr. CLT Dixon

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Asst. Prof. Smith (Coordinator)
Daniel Phelps

The Ensemble



Jenaye Arthurton

is a senior at York majoring in psychology with a minor in Theatre Arts. She has participated backstage in many of York productions but this is her first time actually performing. She is very excited to be a part of *Istwa!* because it requires all the actors to use not only their voices and personalities but also their bodies and imaginations, which is a great experience. She enjoys poetry, writing, music, dancing, eating, sleeping, and last but not least, acting. She is an aspiring actress and loves acting because it's the only career that allows you to be just about anything, all in one moment of your life. How could you not love it?



Alex Constantinides

(the sound man...aka “bada-bing”) is a lower junior at York and has previously performed in *Scapin*, *The Exonerated*, and *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. His main interests include comedy and he wishes to take part in more comedic roles. This is his first time creating sounds for a show and he's is very excited to be a part of *Istwa!* He will be performing in *Fame* later this semester, and he looks forward to taking part in more shows at York and hopefully continues acting after college.

Mr. Ronald C. Thomas

Dean for Administrative Affairs

Dr. Thomas Gibson

Assistant Dean of Student Development

Olga Dais, Esq.

Associate Administrator, Executive Director of Compliance and Legal Affairs

Michel A. Hodge

Acting Assistant Vice-President, Enrollment Management

Barbara Manuel

Acting Executive Director of Human Resources

Sharon Davidson

Registrar

Linda Chesney

Director for Career Services

Earl Simons

Director of Government and Community Relations

Mondell Sealy

Director of Development and Alumni Affairs

Dr. Jean Phelps

Director of Student Activities and Campus Programming

Cynthia Murphy

Executive Director of Adult and Continuing Education

YORK COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION

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President

Dr. Ivelaw L. Griffith

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Jerald Posman

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Administrative Affairs

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Assistant Provost

Dr. Panayiotis Meleties

Dean, School of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Dana Fusco

Dean, School of Health and Behavioral Sciences

Dr. Harry Rosen

Dean, School of Business and Information Systems

Dr. William Dinello

Dean for the Executive Office



Antonio Devers

is a senior in York majoring in Speech Communication/Theater Arts and with a minor in Journalism. He has worked backstage on several shows including *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Exonerated*, *Yo Soy Latina*, and *The Tempest*. He also played Leander in *Scapin*, and has hosted a few York College events as well.



Shruti Garg

is a senior majoring in Business Administration, with a concentration in Marketing. Though she has never been seen in a York College production, she is no stranger to the stage, as she was a contestant in the Ms. York College competition. She is an active student on campus and an avid member of Cardinal Crew. She aspires to be in more upcoming productions of York. "I love you Mom and Dad!"



Joe Grasso

is a senior at York double majoring in Poli-Sci and Theatre Arts. Joe has performed numerous roles in York productions including Gary Gauger in *The Exonerated*, Abbie Hoffman in *Speak Out*, The Plant in *Little Shop of Horrors*, the title role of *Scapin*, and Caliban in *The Tempest*. He is “very excited to be performing in a Shakespearean play.” Joe doesn’t understand that *Istwa!* isn’t Shakespeare, but let’s not tell him.



Freddy Gonzalez

is a Theatre Arts and Speech Communication major. This is his second York Theatre production; he was part of last semester’s *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare, directed by Tom Marion. Freddy is very enthused about *Istwa!* He feels it is completely different from what he is used to, and is taking it as a fun and challenging experience. Freddy is an aspiring director and believes that acting is an invaluable experience. His goals for now are to form a production team, create some film projects, and to someday submit one to a film festival.





ERIC METCALF (*Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Public Address*) is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire (B.A.) and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst (M.A. and Ph.D.). Before joining the York College faculty he taught rhetorical studies at Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia, The College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio, and the Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY. For several years he was employed by the photo services division of the Discovery television networks in Silver Spring, Maryland. He has studied primary campaigning in presidential elections and is currently conducting historical research in the technologies of popular performance in 19th century America. Dr. Metcalf is the newest member of the Performing & Fine Arts Department.



BARBARA NICKOLICH (*Prof. Emerita of Theatre*) received her formal theatre training from Wheaton College, Northwestern University and New York University. In addition, she has been a student of Bobby Troka, voice coach, in NYC. She has appeared as a performer and director with the CUNY Readers Theatre. She developed a one-woman show, *American Counterpoint*, which she performed in Munich, Germany, Nashville and New York City. Some of her past York productions include: *Antigone*, *Tartuffe*, *Six Plays by Dario Fo*, *Callaloo 7*, *The Miser*, *Galileo*, *Callaloo*, *A Servant of Two Masters*, *Endgame*, *The Glass Menagerie*, and *Antigone*.



DAVID T. JONES (*Substitute Lecturer of Theatre/Resident Scenic Designer*) is a resident of Brooklyn and a graduate of Pratt Institute. His most recent designs for York College Theatre were last season's *Fabulation* and *Scapin*, and *The Tempest*. He also designed the previous year's shows including *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Exonerated* and *Anna in the Tropics*. Mr. Jones is the resident scenic designer for the Village Light Opera Group in Manhattan, for whom he has designed most of the Gilbert & Sullivan operas, musicals and operettas. Notable productions include *Scrooge* and *Gilbert and Sullivan*, *Kismet*, *Bells Are Ringing*, *La Vie Parisienne*, a storybook *HMS Pinafore*, an intergalactic *Princess Ida*, and *The Merry Widow* (co-designed with Timothy J. Amrhein). He also designs beyond NYC, his most recent production being *Urinetown* for Northern Highlands Regional High School. For NHRHS has also provided designs for *The Baker's Wife* and *Beauty and the Beast*, which garnered a scenic design nomination from Paper Mill playhouse.



TOM MARION (*Substitute Assistant Prof. of Theatre*) holds an M.F.A. in Acting from Rutgers' Mason Gross School of the Arts (with Bill Esper), a Certificate of Vocal Coaching from The National Theatre Conservatory (with Tony Church), and an internship with The Royal Shakespeare Company (with Cecily Berry and Andrew Wade.) He is a Designated Teacher of Linklater Voice, a founding member of the Linklater Center for Voice and Language, and an Associate Teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework. He has taught at several studios and professional actor programs in NYC, including NYU, The Actors' Center, Marymount Manhattan College, The New School, and Columbia University. He is a member of Actors' Equity. At York Prof. Marion has directed *Fabulation*, *The Exonerated*, *The Tempest*, and was the creator/director of *SPEAK OUT*, which was subsequently performed at The Bowery Poetry Club in Manhattan and at York as part of Black History Month.



Angelica Johnson

is an upper junior at York majoring in Teacher Education/ Interdisciplinary Studies. She became interested in acting after taking a Theatre Arts course with Professor Marion and is making her theatrical debut in ***Istwa!*** She is thrilled to be performing children's theatre because she enjoys working with children and aims to become an Elementary school teacher. She is secretary of the York College Future Teachers Club and believes that it's only when you're tested that you discover who you are, and who you can be.

Istwa!

She prefers to be called Angel because this is exactly what she really is!



Francis Madi

is a senior majoring in Anthropology and minoring in theatre/dance at Queens College. ***Istwa!*** is her first time doing story theatre and it's challenge has made her and the group – “the Istwarrians” – rely on each other for creative ideas, acting, improvisation, narration, and any other talents they could think of. “We hope you enjoy our show as much as we did creating it!”



Arinze Nwogu

is a lower senior at York majoring in Theatre Arts. This is his second production, being seen last semester as the Mariner in ***The Tempest***. He has also worked backstage as a carpenter for many productions. He was the light board operator for the York Drama Club production of ***Pan Africa***. He also looks forward to participating backstage for the upcoming production, ***Fame***.



Cookie La Rode

is completing her second semester at York College. She has always had an interest in theatre performances. Cookie enjoyed working backstage for the previous production of ***The Tempest***. She is excited to be performing for her first time at York College, and hopes to perform in future plays. Her favorite thing in the world is to laugh and smile, because it is one of those free medicines of life.

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Language, Literature and Communication from Columbia University. In his forty-plus years at York, Dr. Como (among other service to the college) has chaired his department for fifteen years, been vice-chair and parliamentarian of the Senate, and has chaired the Committee on Academic Standards and the Instruction Committee. He has been honored for his teaching at the College and continues to serve as coordinator of the Speech Discipline (which he founded in 1968 and has since directed) and as a mentor for The Male Initiative and Men's Center at York. Prof. Como's books are *Why I Believe in Narnia: Thirty-three Reviews and Essays on the Life and Work of C. S. Lewis* (2008, spanning his four decades as a Lewis scholar and critic), *Remembering C.S. Lewis* (1979, 1992, 2005), and *Branches to Heaven* (1998). He has also appeared as a commentator for a number of TV documentaries on Lewis. As a credentialed foreign correspondent Prof. Como covered the landmark Peruvian elections of 1990 ("Prolonging Peruvian Solitude," "The Hero Story-Teller: Mario Vargas Llosa and Peruvian Political Culture" for National Review); his work in rhetorical theory and criticism is evident in international conference papers ("Domain Theory," for the International Society for the History of Rhetoric meeting in Poland), in Proceedings ("Elitism at the Core: Dare We Call it Rhetoric?" the University of North Texas Press), and as journalism ("Debates, Debates and Showbiz," a cover-story for the National Review). Prof. Como has Been a City

University of New York Chancellor's Access to Excellence honoree and a Salvatori Fellow with the Heritage Foundation.



TIM CORKERY (*Lecturer of Speech Communication*) earned his BA in Speech Communication from York College and his Master's in Social Work from Fordham University's Graduate School of Social Science. While studying at Fordham, he was the recipient of the United Settlement House Scholarship for his work in the area of community advocacy, and has been a consultant to various social service agencies, where he has used his knowledge of Rhetoric and Social Work to develop effective community-based models of service. In his current work, he is advocating and developing programs in rehabilitative justice. His work is based on his study of Existential Psychotherapy, especially the work of Viktor Frankel's logotherapy. Aside from his work in clinical social work, he has been successful in the creation of two debate teams in NYC high schools and served as judge for national and international debate competitions.

SPEECH COMMUNICATION/THEATRE ARTS FACULTY and STAFF



TIMOTHY J. AMRHEIN (*Associate Professor of Theatre/Theatre Arts Coordinator*) holds an M.F.A from Wayne State University in Theatre Design and Technology. Prior to his arrival at York College, he served as the faculty technical director and guest designer at the University of Pittsburgh and the faculty designer at Schoolcraft College in Livonia, MI. Though Mr. Amrhein is known for his scenic and costume designs on the York College stage and throughout the tri-state area, he has directed several productions as well. Some of his past directorial credits include: *Scapin*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Anna in the Tropics*, *Loot*, *Dark Ride* and *Ramona Quimby*, *Witness*, *Oleanna*, *All in the Timing*, *Into the Woods*, and *Once Upon A Mattress*. Mr. Amrhein has also designed both costumes and scenery throughout the United States. Some of his most recent designs have been *No Exit*, *Callaloo 12*, *Harlem Speakeasy*, *Galileo*, *Endgame*, *Charley's Aunt* and *Antigone* (York College), the first New York City revival of *The Full Monty* and *The Fantasticks* (The Gallery Players) and *Twelfth Night* (Princeton Rep

Shakespeare Festival). Some of his past work includes: *The Merry Widow*, *My Favorite Year* and *Princess Ida* (Village Light Opera); *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Princeton Rep Shakespeare Festival); and *Bus Stop*, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *A Flea in Her Ear* and *Damn Yankees* (River Rep Theatre Company). Mr. Amrhein has also designed productions for The Wings Theatre, The Second City, Carnegie Mellon University, and the California Rep. Theatre. He received the Best Scenic Design award from the *NJ Star Ledger* for *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and the *Detroit Free Press's* Theatre Excellence Award for *Saturday*, *Sunday*, *Monday* and *Scapin*. He is a member of United Scenic Artists, Local 829 and the United States Institute for Theatre Technology.



JAMES COMO (*Professor of Rhetoric and Public Communication/Speech Communication Coordinator*) holds advanced degrees in medieval English literature and in Public and Group Communication and a Ph.D. in



Bernard Smith

is a sophomore journalism major at York and maintains a balance between his family life and his schoolwork while also participating in his first York theatre performance. A young man with many priorities in front of him, he drives to excel in everything he does. From filmmaking to parenting, he refuses to let anything deflect his motion toward his dreams and aspirations. Creative, energetic, and inspirational are a few words that describe Bernard! *Istwa!* will be his first story theatre play and he hopes you enjoy it!

Kenyatta Thompson *(Assistant Director)*

is a sophomore at York doing a double major in German Language and Literature and Environmental Science. This is her first co-directing position and her first theater position at York College. However, she has previously performed at the Public Theater in Lower Manhattan and various other locations around New York City. Although her aspirations lie outside the Theater, she manages to find herself back there time and time again. She looks forward to being part of the ensemble at the next York College Production. On her off days, Kenyatta enjoys long walks on the beach, re-runs of "Daria" and the occasional Virginia Woolf novel.

Istwa!

SPEECH COMMUNICATION/THEATRE ARTS STAFF



G. LAWRENCE BELCON (*Technical Director*)

A native New Yorker, Bronx and Brooklyn bred, G. Lawrence has spent 18 years as a professional theater Technical Director, Production Manager and Stage Manager for traditional Theatre, Dance, Live Music and Trade Shows. G has worked on projects from Danny Hoch's one man shows on tour internationally (Sydney Opera House, Kennedy Center, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, International Theater Festival in Havana), to Sound Stage Managing at Universal Studios Hollywood. He has 10 years experience as an Independent feature film Producer and Writer, and spent the past 3 years at California Institute Of The Arts as an Assistant Technical Director and adjunct professor for the School Of Dance. G is happy to now be a part of York, and is excited about the years' upcoming work.

Istwa!



JESSICA PECHARSKY MORALES (*Production*

Stage Manager / CLT) attended Hofstra University for both dance and theater. Once at Hofstra, Jessica moved her focus to stage management. She has been stage managing professionally since 2000. She has held resident stage management positions with Streetlight Productions and The Jekyll and Hyde Club. Other companies she has stage managed for include Classical Theatre of Harlem, Centenary Stage, Ma-Yi Theatre, Chester Theater Company, Boomerang Theater, Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, Working Theater, Audax Theatre Group, Capacitor, Theatre LILA, Clubbed Thumb, American Globe Theater, Heartists Productions, and Moonwork. Jessica is a professional member of Actors Equity Association (AEA).

Light Board Operator.....**Annmargaret Centera**

Follow-spot Operator.....**Jennifer Silverio**

Props Manager..... **Reva Collins-Lewis**

Box Office..... **Annakay Vaz & Lisamarie Gardner**

Backstage Crew:..... **Arthur Chen, Hakim Fridie,
Andres Garcia, Edwin Illoh,
Lindsay Johnson, Kevin King,
Kishwar Mendi, Mukhtar Solola,
Kenyatta Thompson**

Assistant Stage Manager.....**Alexander Constantinides**

House Manager.....**Kimberly Martin**

Poster**David T. Jones**

Reva Collins-Lewis (Backstage Crew) is a lower senior majoring in Sociology/minoring in Theatre Arts. This is her third production working backstage. Previously, she crewed on *The Tempest* and *Yo Soy Latina*. She enrolled in Theatre 215 to enhance her creative abilities. She currently works as a UFT paraprofessional at P.S.30.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

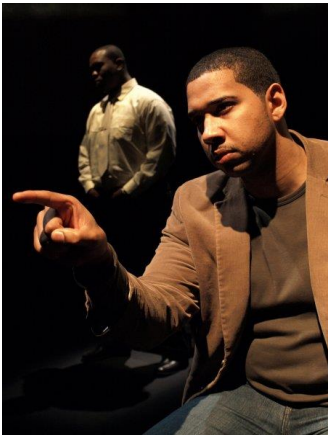
Joseph Hart
Gloria Giraldo
Lindamichelle Baron

YORK COLLEGE THEATRE
Past Productions



Fabulation
by Lynn Nottage
Directed by Tom Marion

Little Shop of Horrors
by Howard Ashman
& Alan Menken
Directed by
Timothy J. Amrhein



The Exonerated
by Jessica Blank & Eric Jensen
Directed by Tom Marion

Guest Lighting Designer



Daniel Winter

Off Broadway: *Adaptations For the Stage* The Director's Company, *The Monkey Show* Labyrinth Theatre Company, *Tick Parade* Dixon Place. Off-Off Broadway: *8 Track: B-sides and Mash-ups* Creative Destruction, *The Brokenhearteds* The Wings Theatre, *The Pajama Game* Amas Musical Theatre, *Impossible Country* Mud/Bone Collective. Regional: *To Kill A Mockingbird* Burning Coal Theater Company, *Twelfth Night* Burning Coal Theater Company, *Sleeping Beauty* Garage Theatre Company, *Evolve Dance Festival* Evolve Dance Company. Opera: *Rusalka* Opera Slavica, *The Magic Flute* Amore Opera. Daniel holds an MFA in lighting design from Ohio University. He is also an accomplished photographer. His work can be seen at www.danielwintersdesign.com and www.dwintersphoto.com. He is very excited to be working with York this season.

Myths for Children

Why do we tell each other stories?

It hasn't even been a hundred years (one long lifetime) since folks first started going to movies or listening to a show on radio. Before that a person sometimes went to the theatre. Or if they lived in the country, as most people did, they had to wait for a traveling theatre group to visit and perform at the local opera house. Sometimes kids kept themselves busy by going through mom or dad's old trunk playing dress up, or making puppets out of Popsicle sticks. Mostly though, people just told stories to each other.

Story time is special. It is a chance for us to join together with family or neighbors and relate experiences— tales of love, bravery, humor, adventure, suspense, and even horror. Nobody can hear a story by themselves. Somebody has to tell it. The words "communication & community" derive from the same Latin origin. They mean "sharing." And it's always special to share a story with someone - especially when a story is really fun!

Stories can also teach us things. We all come on to this earth not knowing much at all. It's rather humbling to see a spider spin a complicated web, or a three week old hummingbird fly up-side-down, when we as children had so much trouble just learning to stand up, let alone walk! We're born with a lot of capacity, but not much in the way of what to do, or how to do it as we grow up. We have to be taught things.

Every culture around the earth has stories to teach their children— stories passed down from generation to generation. Grown-ups have stories they tell each other, too. Grown-up stories are called myths. "**Myth**: *n.* usually a traditional story of ostensibly historical events that serves to unfold part of the world view of a people or explain a practice, belief, or natural phenomenon." Sometimes myths are acted out— like a marriage ceremony. In our country marriage can be just a legal thing, but in many cultures it is a mythic event— the mystery of two people coming together as one. Stories for children though, are called fairy tales or folktales, and they deal mostly with the questions and problems of childhood. And like all myths from around the world, these tales can seem very different in

character and events but end up exploring the very same issues: How to live in a family. How to respect your elders. How to treat other people. How to handle our selfish impulses. How to grow up. How to be good! One of the best ways to tell someone how to be good, is by example— a role model. People especially like to tell stories of heroes. Everyone looks up to a hero. Heroes are those of us who fight against terrible trouble to help people in the community. A hundred years ago everyone had heard about George Washington and the cherry tree, or John Henry and the hammer. But what about today?

In our “age of communication” storytelling has become more a source of revenue than a sharing of knowledge. If you want a story, it will cost you. Nothing is free. Even on the Internet a person must fend off advertisements and give away a part of themselves to databank cookie collectors. Money becomes the dominant culture providing stories. And as a culture, profit doesn’t ask what kids need: It asks, “What will get kids to want more?” The ironic answer is found in commercialized entertainment’s vast appeal to cravings and naïve impulses, the very ones good stories help us to palliate. The “fun” experience is hyped, while the value of teaching, of role modeling, and of social involvement, is pushed to the side. With technology we don’t need a community to hear a story. We can hear, see, and even participate in a video game story, by ourselves, and at anytime. Children are plugged in to video iPods for short rides in the car or the subway; but a story ceases to be communication if it only takes and doesn’t give.

“**Istwa**” means story in Creole. And ***Istwa!*** is created from four traditional stories for children from four different cultures: Germany, The United States’ Appalachian Mountains, Haiti, and Ghana. Since mid-August The Ensemble of ***Istwa!*** has met more than 150 hours together. Their goal has been simple, but not easy: To create a show based on the value of full communication— communicating with a total commitment to voice, body, and spirit with the desire to evoke a shared experience with an audience of children and adults of all ages. No batteries necessary!

- Tom Marion

If you'd like to read the folktales presented here today, you can find them in the following books:

The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm: Jacob Grimm, Wilhelm Grimm, and Jack Zipes.
Favorite Folktales from Around the World (Pantheon Fairy Tale and Folklore Library): Jane Yolen.
The Magic Orange Tree: and Other Haitian Folktales: Diane Wolkstein