

MetroSpective

VOL. XV NO. 1

THE NEWSLETTER OF METRO THEATER COMPANY

FALL 2006

A charming, thought-provoking play for young audiences ... A strong testament to the forces that bring people together: imagination, curiosity and hope.

– Kate Pederson,
NOW Magazine



by Emil Sher

Adapted from the book *Hana's Suitcase* by Karen Levine
Originally published by Second Story Press

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JAN 11 - 21, 2007

Thurs., Jan 11: 7:30 pm

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Sat., Jan 13: 2:00 & 7:30 pm

Sun., Jan 14: 2:00 pm

Fri., Jan 19: 7:30 pm

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It is March, 2000. A child's suitcase arrives from Auschwitz at the Tokyo Holocaust Education Resource Center. The suitcase bears the name and birth date of Hana Brady. Painted across the battered piece of luggage is the German word "waisenkind," or "orphan."

Who was Hana? What happened to her? The Japanese children at the Holocaust Center demand to know. With only these few clues in hand, their

teacher, Fumiko Ishioka, sets off to uncover Hana's identity. Ishioka's determined pursuit leads her first to Prague and ultimately to Canada, where at last she learns the story of Hana and her family under the Nazi regime.

Metro Theater Company and Edison Theatre co-present the U.S. premiere of this important new play, based on the true story, in a limited run this January. Artistic Director Carol North has assembled an interna-

tional cast of professional actors, designers and musicians, including Japanese actress Haruna Tsuchiya, who will play the role of Fumiko. On opening night January 11, 2007, honored guests Fumiko Ishioka, Hana's brother George, and playwright Emil Sher will be in the audience and at the post-performance reception. (For more details, contact the Edison Theatre Box Office at 314-935-6543.)

continued on page 2

Nurturing Young Agents of Social Change

Who is Hana Brady? What happened to her?" Japanese children asked these questions with such insistence Fumiko Ishioka knew she must pursue answers. Many told her she'd never be able to trace the story of one child who perished in the Holocaust. But Fumiko was determined. The children needed to know.

The children's questions were the driving force that brought them together with Hana's brother, George, who had survived the war and now lives in Toronto. For George Brady,

connecting with children on the other side of the globe brought an end to sixty years of nightmares in which he agonized over his sister's fate at Auschwitz.

What makes *Hana's Suitcase* so powerful for me is its implicit call to social action. Fumiko Ishioka took action by establishing a learning center in Japan for children who, she believed, needed to learn about the Holocaust. She took action by requesting artifacts from Europe that would give the children a tangible link to children who died six decades earlier. When Hana

Brady's suitcase arrived from the Auschwitz Museum, Fumiko relentlessly sought answers to the children's questions. The children themselves took up the call to action, publishing a newsletter to spread a message of tolerance to other young people in Japan.

I feel a particular urgency about telling this story now. Daily we're bombarded with reports of intolerance, injustice and inhumanity – plagues that affect our city, our nation and our world. My ardent hope is that young people who see *Hana's Suitcase* will



be moved to respond with their own call to action. And we adults? Our job is to take them seriously and give them support. As Fumiko Ishioka's example reminds us, it begins by listening carefully to the questions children ask. I believe that's where hopeful change is born. ★

Carol North

CAROL NORTH
Artistic Director

Hana, continued from p.1

Sher's play had its first production last spring at the Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People in Toronto where it received rave reviews. During the extended, seven-week run, over 26,000 people saw the play. Sher says, "In the world of this play, the past and present are braided but never blend: two Japanese children imagine



GEORGE BRADY AND FUMIKO ISHIOKA AT THE TOKYO HOLOCAUST EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER



HANA AND GEORGE,
NOVE MESTO, 1939

Hana's story as it unfolds but cannot affect it; unable to change the past, they unearth their potential to shape the future."

Numerous St. Louis community partners – many of them schools – share Metro Theater Company's

belief in the important messages of tolerance and peace that *Hana's Suitcase* delivers. Thanks to funding support from the ASC and Simon Foundations, Education Director Emily Petkewich will be in over twenty area classrooms this

season teaching a residency program entitled "A Place for Everyone: Building Community through Drama." Seven school day matinees to the play are nearly sold out. Tickets for the general public are going fast. ★



by Colleen Neuman

Five Hilarious Folktales from Around the World

Ticket Prices

\$14 Adults

\$12 Students/Seniors

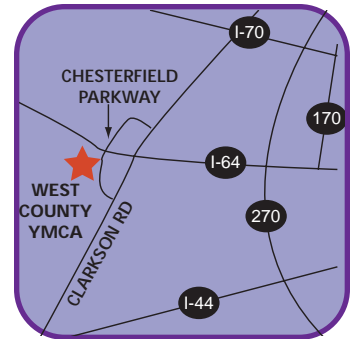
\$7 groups of
10 or more



Laugh till you're silly in this fun-filled production that features tales from the Middle East, China, Africa and Europe. What's a Kerfafel? Wisconsin-based playwright Colleen Neuman admits she made up the word to capture the "OOPS!" – a mix-up that results from preposterous situations. A cooking pot has a baby. A talkative turtle takes his first flight. Five brothers lose each other in a safety headcount. This hysterical, mirror-up-to-human-

nature play invites us to laugh at ourselves, as we watch the antics of these hapless characters. Neuman's crackling wit creates stylish storytelling at its best.

If you loved Metro Theater Company's production of *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* last season, you're sure to enjoy this show. Some of your favorite St. Louis performers are back on stage in *Kerfafels*: Eddie Webb, Christopher Mannelli, Stephanie Strohmman, Nicholas Kryah and professional clown, Josh Routh. Composer/musician Peter Hesed (*Clown of God*) creates and performs live music that fills this production, directed by Emily Petkewich. Buy your tickets now for the venue nearest you, and prepare to have a rollicking good time. ✨



West County Family YMCA

16464 Burkhardt Pl., Chesterfield
Sat, Mar 3: 11:00 am & 2:00 pm
Sun, Mar 4: 3:30 pm
Student Matinees
Thur, Mar 1: 10:00 am
Fri, Mar 2: 10:00 am

Theater at Concordia

6501 Clayton Rd.
(across from St. Mary's Hospital)
Sat, Mar 10: 11:00 am
Sun, Mar 11: 1:30 & 3:30 pm
Sat, Mar 17: 11:00 am
Sun, Mar 18: 1:30 & 3:30 pm
Student Matinees
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Thur, Mar 8: 10:00 am
Fri, Mar 9: 10:00 am



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www.metrotheatercompany.org

Long Road to Freedom

by Jan Lucas

Schools are raving about this powerful story of the Underground Railroad! Meet two strong women whose hearts will always be bound by friendship. Mary Catherine is a Quaker widow living in Ohio. Graceanna is an escaped slave who has made her way to freedom in Canada. Separated now by hundreds of miles, the women re-live the summer they met as ten-year-old girls. Accompanied by Lydia Ruffin's live music, this moving production addresses the importance of taking a stand even when the stakes are high.

Touring to Schools: October 2006 - April 2007

TOURING PRODUCTION

PARENTS, make certain your child's school has scheduled one of Metro Theater Company's TOURING PRODUCTIONS.



TEACHERS, make your plans now for a lively PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT course next summer and earn three graduate credits from Maryville University. Ask us about REACHING ALL THE LEARNERS THROUGH THE ARTS!



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FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CONTACT
Rita Mannelli,
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rita@metrotheatercompany.org



PARENTS, if you're looking for a SUMMER ARTS PROGRAM for your child that invites every child to be front and center, Metro Theater Company's ArtsINTERsection and YOUNG VOICES are a perfect fit!



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- STORIES COME ALIVE!
- MAKING MATH REAL!
- SCIENCE MOVES!
- A PLACE FOR EVERYONE



by Nicholas Kryah

Stix and Stonz want to be friends, but careless use of words keeps tripping them up. The boys try one strategy after another to share space and have a good time. But the tension between them escalates until someone really gets hurt by the knock-out phrase, "I hate you." When they realize how each of them has been responsible, they sort out terms for a new beginning.

Adam Rugo's witty music and the skilled acting of Eddie Webb and Nicholas Kryah create a lively, action-filled story with lots to think about afterwards.

Touring to Schools: February - April 2007

TOURING PRODUCTION

THANK YOU! METRO THEATER COMPANY GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE

This listing represents support from July 1, 2005 through September 18, 2006. We apologize if we have omitted anyone who should have been included or spelled any names incorrectly. Please let us know so we can correct future listings. Thank you!

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by Emil Sher
Adapted from the book *Hana's Suitcase* by Karen Levine

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SAVE THE DATE!

Metro Theater Company and Edison Theatre invite you to join us for an opening night post-show reception. Mark your calendars now for

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2007
and watch your mail for an invitation to the opening night event!