



arena en los bolsillos

presents

Outside is a place

Life was waiting for him outside,

author *Elisa Vargas*

direction *Rosa Diaz*

and it would be rude to be late!



Theatre show for babies 1-4 years

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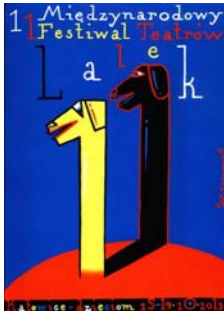
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“Babies experience life as a continuous adventure into the unknown”

Suzanne Lebeau

AWARDS



- Double Award for Best Male Performance at 11th Katowice Puppets Festival “Katowice for Children 2013”, Poland

- Special Award for Scenic Animation at 11th Katowice Puppets Festival “Katowice for Children 2013”, Poland



- DRAC D’OR Award for Best Scenography at the Puppet Theatre Fair of Lleida 2013, Spain



- Two Nominations at the “Andalusian Theatre Awards 2013” for Best Show for Children and Best Scenography, Spain



- Show RECOMMENDED by the Spanish Network of Theatres, LA RED in 2012 & 2013



- Show RECOMMENDED by the Basque Network of Theatres SAREA, Spain

SYNOPSIS

Everything the child knew about the world was contained within those four walls and a small window... What is the wind like? What does a stubbly beard feel like? What does silence sound like? And what noise does a dog make? "Mummy, what is 'outside'?" "Outside? Outside is a place, my son." The small window became a great door onto the world. Once he had taken his first step, curiosity took over his feet and his own path became his best friend.

With an uncontrollable, spirited impulse, he discovered the feel of the grass under his feet, the rays of sun that warmed his skin. His eyes were filled by a sky of the purest blue, and he thought that all this was just for him. And he wanted to see more.

Life was waiting for him outside, and it would be rude to be late!

ARTISTIC CREDITS

<i>Author:</i>	<i>Elisa Vargas</i>
<i>Direction:</i>	<i>Rosa Díaz</i>
<i>Cast:</i>	<i>Iker Pérez & Javier Martín</i>
<i>Music:</i>	<i>Mariano Lozano - P</i>
<i>Lighting and sound:</i>	<i>Juan Felipe Tomatierra</i>
<i>Scenery and puppetry:</i>	<i>Iker Pérez</i>
<i>Set finishing and costume:</i>	<i>ATO Teatro</i>
<i>Production and distribution:</i>	<i>Elisa Vargas</i>
<i>Photography:</i>	<i>Juan Manuel Jiménez</i>

A VIEW

“All over the world there are prisons in which mothers and their babies are deprived of their freedom. It is a very contradictory situation, since mother and child have the right to be together, but the baby is never a prisoner.

The environment they grow up in is not natural for a child. They miss out on all the usual aspects of the outside world such as cooking or going to the park or supermarket. The majority of these children have never seen the moon; they don't know what the word 'outside' means. They are used to seeing short distances; instead of playing at mummies and daddies they play

prison visits and confiscation, and male role models are not a common feature in their lives.

These children do not even learn about simple things such as switching the lights on and off or opening and closing doors.

At a certain point during this difficult situation, mother and child will have to face the tremendously difficult and marvellous moment that we have used as the starting point for this work and its emotional core.



At three years of age, the toddlers must leave the prison and are separated from their mothers. The majority will experience the outside world for the first time. They are left in the hands of strangers and will be unable to share their discovery of the world with their mothers, who will not see them grow... But at the same time, something momentous begins: the discovery of life, the child's freedom. This should be a happy moment, and so these mothers, in an effort that tightens like a fist around their soul, prepare their children for this separation by instilling in them a great curiosity for the world they are to discover, filling them with confidence while they hide their fear and pain. This lesson in love captivated us.

And it is just the moment when Outside is a Place begins.

We have tackled the challenge of this theatre work for babies and toddlers from a positive perspective. We want to help them discover freedom and curiosity in the face of new life experiences. This journey takes a very special path, with the mother's body represented by the metaphor of a great mountain. A story that is told moving up towards the top of the mountain, a landscape in which a child is never alone."

Elisa Vargas



THE COMPANY

The members of this puppet and object theatre group specializing in theatre



works for babies and toddlers, Elisa Vargas and Iker Pérez, have built on years of training and experience in different fields of performance art to bring their aspirations, hard work, and commitment to art and early childhood together in the creation of this joint project: ARENA EN LOS BOLSILLOS (the company's name refers to those "sandy pockets" we all remember having as a child). The idea was born in 2008, and has been nurtured by a clearly defined line of work, as well as a dedication to professional, responsible, and

sensitive creativity aimed at the youngest of audiences.

As they begin to move around on their own two feet, toddlers open up a whole new world to explore. They are fascinated by everything they find, and their curiosity for new sights, sounds, and sensations knows no bounds. This joie de vivre has inspired us to find new realms of expression and communication while always respecting the growth cycle of younger children. The honesty

of the stories, the quality of the design, attention to detail, careful lighting, and music that envelops the listener, together with indispensable professional guidance and expertise in child education, allow us to take on projects which offer unique experiences.

The company staged its first work, When the Moon Comes Out, in 2008. Focused on childhood experiences and the city, the work was a resounding success with audiences and critics alike, appearing at the most important children's theatre fairs and festivals in Spain. More than 9,000 young children have enjoyed this magical show over the years.

In 2010, the company began to research its second show, Outside is a Place. Directed by Rosa Díaz, winner of the National Award for Children and Youth Theatre 2011 awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Culture, the work premiered in 2012 at the European Theatre Fair for Children (FETEN) held in Gijón. The difficult context of the experiences of children in prisons has been transformed into the emotional basis for this creative work. While never losing sight of the target audience, Outside is a Place confronts this situation from the perspective of the marvellous and intense turning point, the passionate journey into freedom and curiosity encapsulated in a child's first life experiences. Once more, the company aims to entertain, surprise, stimulate and guide audiences in awakening their senses.

Since its premiere, this work has been praised by the most important theatre networks in Spain.

REVIEWS:

“‘YOU CAN TOUCH THE CLOUDS’ - Crawling around restlessly just a few centimetres away from the actors, the children watch every instant of the story enraptured, even stretching up to almost touch the clouds. Once again, Rosa’s tender direction, Elisa’s versatile writing and Iker and Javier’s harmonious, serene acting provide an hour of dreams and fantasies for those who will be future audiences at the box office before we have even realized it. A journey and a meeting of solitude outside and motherhood inside which is very appropriate to the target age group. A beautiful work that enchanted young children and their families.”

ANDRÉS MOLINARI

“Outside is a Place, brought to us by the Granada-based theatre company Arena en los Bolsillos, is a hymn to life’s possibilities, to the strength that a baby must develop when growing in order to overcome all the obstacles he or she will face in the absence of their parents. It is a hymn to self-confidence, adventure, and the discovery of what it means to live”.

PICASSO MUSEUM, MALAGA

“This young Andalusian company has composed an interesting and poetic show of notable visual beauty with sensitivity and good puppeteering and acting”.

FERRÁN BAILE, FETEN 2012

“‘CHILDREN’S THEATRE SHINES IN PALMA DEL RÍO’ At the Theatre Fair in the South, the mornings are dedicated to children, and in light of what we are viewing it can be said that the level is sometimes higher than that of the theatre for adults. This is the case of the work Outside is a Place from the Granada-based company Arena en los Bolsillos. The company boasts the invaluable experience offered by the director Rosa Díaz, winner of the National Award for Children and Youth Theatre 2011. ‘Marvellous’, ‘fantastic’, ‘brilliant’, and ‘beautiful’ were some of the adjectives used by experts and audiences to summarize the performances of Francisco Javier Martín and Iker Pérez, who are responsible for the clever scenography.”

JAVIER PAISANO

CONCEPT

SCENOGRAPHY AND SET

The set is made up of different objects that represent rocks which, at the start of the work, are spread out over the whole stage area. The actors will interact with the rocks in a game, discovering their different possibilities and uses.

Our story begins in the largest of these rocks. The interior of this object is a small, narrow space with a window where a mother and her young son live. The mother encourages her son to go outside and discover the world, something that he must do alone. In order to instil curiosity in the child for the outside world, she tells him about the sea, the wind, the earth... The mother puts a small rucksack on her son's back, opens the window on the world and bids him goodbye.

As the scenes progress, the audience is gradually shown how these rocks are in fact like the pieces of a big puzzle that forms a single element: a great mountain. The story is told in an ascending way, from the valley floor where



the protagonist discovers contact with the earth, grass and flowers up through a central section where he discovers a small forest, some of the animals that live

there, the source of a river that runs down to the sea, a cliff from where he

can watch whales, to finally reach the top of the mountain where the child discovers the wind and the clouds, which reward him with a wonderful display of recognizable forms.

Each step brings a new discovery for the child. He is transported by his curiosity, which evokes all kinds of sensations: the texture of the grass under his feet, the smell of the flowers, the sound of the water, the breeze on his skin, the solitude and silence of the night, the effort of taking a few more steps, and the end reward of what he will find on the mountain top.



In this work, each of the scenes that builds up to its resolution relates a part of the body to a sensation experienced for the first time by the central character.

Starting with the torso already placed at the centre of the set at the outset of the work, in the first scene the feet and legs are introduced, then attached to the torso. The protagonist experiences the textures of the earth and the grass under his feet, and the ability to run in an open space without walls to limit him.

In the second scene, the arms and hands are attached. At this point, the main character is confronted by the solitude of night time, and the difficulty of continuing on his climb. The arms rock the child and the hands protect him, caressing him and helping him to climb.

In the third and final scene, the head is represented by the mountain top, where the main character uses his imagination to make out different forms in the evocative clouds he sees.

But this mountain is a very special object, since the rocks are really parts of a human body (feet, hands, limbs, torso and head) that the actors put together as the scenes progress. The whole is a giant puppet in the form of the mountain that the child is climbing.

This big mountain in human form is not just a prop for our little adventurer; it will also interact with him on his journey, offering play, protection, help, shelter.... In reality, the mountain is a metaphor for the mother who accompanies her child on his journey in this singular way.

ACTORS

The whole play is performed by two actors. In the case of this work in particular, we deliberately chose two male figures for the staging of the play.



This is for two reasons:

Firstly, this gave us a way of counterbalancing the very intense figure of the mother in the story, shown firstly in a closed space where the separation and reunion take place, and secondly as the puppet-mountain during the rest of the work.

Moreover, we firmly believe in men's ability to express tenderness, delicacy, play and care, and we needed to show this to a special audience in a very natural way. We wanted to move beyond the roles established in society that dictate that women are associated with emotion and men with strength. This was even more important in the case of a work based on a specific situation of mothers in prison with their children in which the male figure is not a habitual one in the child's life.



EDUCATIONAL BASES OF THE SHOW

CHILDREN'S CURIOSITY

This is the vital urge to learn, know, see, touch, feel... To not settle for first appearances. Children delight in testing their limits. Their curiosity is boundless motivation, the purest innocence. Children need to know about the world around them, how it moves, why they are here. They discover the texture of their toys, their weight, the sound they make when they fall, different flavours, the reactions of the people at their side.

Curiosity is enjoying the process of generating new questions, discovering the causes of the things they see and solving mysteries.

But sometimes children encounter ideas along the way that cannot be resolved and things that don't fit or that they cannot understand. It is OK to not have all the answers and to just marvel at the wonder of the world.

There are questions that have more than one possible answer, and for this reason children can "believe" in things that they will not think credible when they grow up. In their innocence, children can hold true things that can seem infinitely irrational or fantastic to adults.

A child does not understand what danger is. Although they are told "no" a thousand times, they will try a thousand times over to stick their fingers in a plug socket until they can understand what it is like, or try to reach something they want on the highest shelf time and time again.

Curiosity imbues life with emotion. It makes for an interesting life full of adventures.

“For a child, the world is full of mysterious objects, incomprehensible events, indecipherable figures. Their very presence in the world is an unexplained mystery, a riddle with no solution. They try to find the answers by asking direct and indirect questions. Knowledge often arrives in the form of a surprise, and so they have the pleasure of experiencing things in a disinterested way, through play, the excitement of the search and surprise”.

Gianni Rodari.

THE BODY: OUR TRAVELLING COMPANION

Alongside the development of their senses and abilities, babies begin to discover their body and understand how their environment works.

The first toy babies get to know is their body. They gradually discover it, firstly by observing their feet and hands, then their mouth and nose... Little by little, they discover their inseparable travelling companion: their body. They embark on an adventure of discovering what effect they have on their surroundings and the impact their surroundings have on them.

The recognition of our bodies is part of our emotional development: it provides positive information on our beings and our bodies. This strengthens babies' self-esteem from the first moments of their life.

Discovering that each part of their body has a special function helps children to be independent and ensures their personal growth.

The importance for small children of physical contact is primordial; being held, caressed and cared for provides them with safety and stimulation, developing strong emotional links essential during the first few years of a person's life.

WHY CHOOSE THEATRE FOR BABIES AND TODDLERS?

Theatre for babies and toddlers

We all know that children have a right to food, protection, and education... But there is another children's right which is often given little attention: the right to culture.

Within equal opportunities, it is culture that helps children to develop their aptitudes, and form individual opinions and a sense of social and moral responsibility so that they can grow up learning values such as dignity, tolerance, freedom, and solidarity.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights for Children protects children's rights to play and entertainment, recreational activities appropriate to their age, and to free participation in cultural life and the arts.

Surrounding them with music, introducing them to books, taking them to the theatre: these are all ways for children to learn, and appreciate beauty.

In developing their personality, children have the right to be curious, to think and feel stimulated, to express themselves freely and spontaneously, imagine and create, grow in self-confidence, learn more about the world around them, and access the arts.

Humanity owes children the best it has to offer, and this responsibility falls primarily to the adult, although grown-ups and children may have very different ways of thinking and feeling. Childhood is short, but during this time we live through fundamental experiences which condition our whole life. The time we dedicate to children, and the activities we share together today, will be their best memories tomorrow.

Children have a right to the present. The time will come for them to deal with other matters, but later in life we experience everything in quite a different way. They should not only be educated in preparation for adult life, but also enjoy a happy childhood. Children are not just tomorrow's public: they are today's audience.

Arena en los Bolsillos Theatre Company