

Golden Thread Fairytale Players'

Magical Journeys

Nasrudin's Magnificent Journey to Samarqand

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

*"Remember my friend: if you want to look deeply,
look at the man and not the coat. You can change the coat,
but you cannot change the man."*



Nasrudin's Magnificent Journey to Samarqand is a visually colorful performance with dynamic story-telling, dance and music. It is adapted from several folk tales centered on the comedic personage, Mulla Nasrudin or Nasrudin Hoja, a wise fool renowned in Central Asia, Turkey and Iran. 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. 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 and among the resources used to create the play. In this performance we follow Nasrudin's adventures as he travels from Bukhara through Konya, and Damascus to arrive at Samarqand, his destination on the ancient Silk Route. The journey takes us through Central Asia and Turkey. Will Nasrudin and his faithful donkey ever make it to Samarqand, the capital of the Timurid Dynasty and the center of arts and crafts on the ancient Silk Road? There is only one way to 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.

Sample Questions:

- What cities did we visit in today's play?
- What are some examples of Nasrudin's unusual behavior?
- What are some non-English words used in the story? What do they mean?



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, circus arts and puppetry are utilized in various tales along with audience participation.

Fairytale Players are part of Golden Thread's Education Program designed to educate the public about the Middle East through dynamic, multi-disciplinary theatrical performances inspired by Middle Eastern arts and literature.

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Inspired by popular performance traditions in the Middle East (Hakawati, Ru hozi, Naghalli, Karagoz) Golden Thread's 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 repertoire 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 assembly productions run 50-minutes, involve more actors, include a study guide 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 Golden Thread's 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 repertoire includes the full assembly performance *Rumi X 7 = Tales from the Masnavi* and the 2-person Magical Journey's performance *Nasrudin's Magnificent Journey to Samarkand*.



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Golden Thread

Middle East Center Stage

Nasrudin's Magnificent Journey to Samarkand



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