Theater Terra (The Netherlands)

SPOT

FEB 2 10 am
Welcome to the Hop

A performance needs an audience, so be prepared to play your part!

Theater Etiquette

When entering the Hopkins Center, show consideration for all those sharing the building by remaining quiet and respectful in common areas.

Be aware and use quiet voices. Remember that live theater differs greatly from watching television or movies or attending a sporting event. Live performers can hear and see you and are easily distracted by any talking or moving around in the audience. Even the smallest sounds can be heard throughout the theater, so it's best to be quiet so that everyone can enjoy the performance.

Applause is the best way to show your enthusiasm and appreciation!

Important things to remember: Backpacks, food, drink, and gum are not allowed in the theater. Please turn off all cell phones and note that recording the performance or taking any photos is strictly prohibited. Hats off! It is respectful to remove hats during your time in the theater.

Information for Teachers

Be prepared and arrive early. You should arrive at the theater 30 to 45 minutes before the show. Allow for travel time, parking, and trips to the restroom. You should be in your seat at least 15 minutes before the performance begins.

Have a head count. On the day of the performance be sure to have an accurate head count of students, chaperones, and teachers.

Staying for lunch? Please call 603.646.2010 no later than one week in advance of the show to make a reservation for lunch. The day of the show, bring lunches in marked boxes and give them to a Hop staff member. Lunches will be ready for you after the show.

Photo Policy. The Hopkins Center may take photographs during the performance for use on our website or on promotional materials. If you or your students do not wish to be photographed, please see a Hop staff member.

The Show Must Go On! We do not cancel events due to inclement weather. Performances will only be canceled if the artist is unable to reach the theater. Schools will be notified by phone if the performance has been cancelled. We do not issue refunds for weather-related cancellations; please feel free to fill empty seats with other school members.

For more information about arrival and departure procedure, bus parking, show length, and purchasing tickets for upcoming performances, please visit the Hop’s website at https://hop.dartmouth.edu/Online/plan_a_successful_visit.

This study guide was created for you by the Outreach & Arts Education team. To download copies of this study guide, see additional resources for this event, or view past study guides, please visit: www.hop.dartmouth.edu/outreach.

Enjoy the Show!

Hopkins Center Outreach Department:
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The Hopkins Center Outreach & Arts Education department embodies the Hop’s mission to “ignite and sustain a passion for the arts.” It provides Dartmouth, the community and beyond rare personal contact with artists and a broad context for the performing arts. Unveiling the creative process of extraordinarily diverse artists, Outreach programs touch more than 14,000 lives each year.

DID YOU KNOW?

• The Hopkins Center opened in 1962.
• The Hopkins Center was designed by Wallace Harrison, architect of Lincoln Center and the United Nations Building in New York City.
• The first three rows of The Moore Theater are on an elevator that goes eleven feet below ground to create an orchestra pit and can also be raised to the height of the stage to make it larger.
• In The Moore Theater, the area over the stage, called the “fly loft,” is 63 feet tall.
ABOUT THE COMPANY

Theater Terra—an award-winning theater for youth based in Amsterdam, Holland, The Netherlands—has been creating puppet theater pieces for over 30 years. They perform both in their native country and internationally, touring to the United States, Canada, Russia, Italy, France, Austria, Spain, Germany, Japan and China. Using large, plush puppets and original songs, the group creates accessible and unique puppet performances for the very young using familiar stories. Past shows they have done include Little Donkey and Frog’s Birthday, Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves, a new show, premieres in 2015.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Based on the popular lift-the-flap books by Eric Hill, Spot takes place on a farm where pup Spot and his friend Helen, a hippo, are visiting Spot’s dad who works on the farm. Unfortunately, all of the animals are missing! Spot and Helen go on a musical adventure to find the lost chickens, pigs and cow and bring them back to their correct places on the farm. The puppeteers are actors and singers who are dressed as farm workers. They manipulate the puppets and provide the voices for each character.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eric Hill was born on September 7, 1927, in London, England. He lived in London until the start of World War II when, in 1939 at the age of 12, he was evacuated to a small village in the English countryside. He returned to school in London in 1940, but left school at age 15 to start his first job. The next year, he worked at an art studio as a messenger, where he was encouraged to draw cartoons in his spare time. He joined the Royal Air Force for a time, and upon returning to civilian life started his career as a cartoonist. Eric’s cartoons and illustrations were published in many national magazines and newspapers. In 1976, Eric’s son Christopher was born. When Christopher was two years old, his father made up a story about a small puppy to read to him at bedtime. In 1980, the first Spot book, Where’s Spot? was published. Eric went on write many more books about Spot, which have sold over 60 million copies worldwide. Eric and his family eventually moved to California where he lived until his death in 2014.

ACTORS/PUPPETEERS:
(left-right, below)
Desi Doeveren
Theun Plantinga
Mareille Labohm
Jeroen Molenar
contextual background

Translation
The Spot books were originally written in English, but Terra Theater translated them into Dutch for their production of Spot, and then back into English for their performances in the United States. In the Dutch language version of the musical, “Spot” translates to “Dribbel” and “Helen” translates to “Lina.” In the books and the English language version of the show, Spot’s father is “Sam,” but in the Dutch version he is “Max.”

Puppetry
The style of puppetry that Theater Terra uses is heavily influenced by bunraku puppetry. Bunraku (boon-RAH-ku) is an ancient form of puppetry that was developed in Japan. The puppets used in bunraku are large—sometimes almost life-sized—and they are manipulated by one to three puppeteers, depending on the size of the puppet. The puppeteers stand behind the puppet, moving various parts of the puppet’s body. The puppeteers wear black costumes with hoods except for the master puppeteer who wears a costume without a hood. A narrator speaks all of the lines.

Theater Terra builds off of the tradition of bunraku by having a visible actor handle each of the puppets. Instead of being dressed in black to blend in to the background, the Theater Terra puppeteers are dressed as farm workers to blend in with the farm setting. They speak and sing to bring the characters and story to life.

DID YOU KNOW?
The Spot books have been translated into 60 different languages. Spot has many names depending on what country he is in:
- Arabic—Boby
- Swedish—Tippens
- Portuguese—Bolinha
- Norwegian—Tassen

Author Eric Hill and a young friend with a Welsh translation of Spot Goes to School

Bunraku puppet and puppeteers

Theater Terra’s style of puppetry, influenced by bunraku
THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands is a country in northwestern Europe bordering the North Sea. The official name of the country is The Kingdom of the Netherlands. The kingdom is made up of twelve provinces. Two of them, North and South Holland, together make Holland, which is why The Netherlands is sometimes referred to as Holland. People who live in The Netherlands are referred to as Dutch. The official language is also called Dutch. Many Dutch also speak German and English. The province of Friesland has a choice between speaking Dutch and Frisian, the only officially recognized regional language.

Water dominates the Dutch landscape. Three big European rivers—the Rhine, Meuse and Scheldt—reach the ocean via the Netherlands and create an important delta. Being so close to so much water means some of the land in The Netherlands is actually below sea level. The water is controlled by a system of dikes to make sure there is no flooding. Because there is so much water, many cities in The Netherlands have used canals for delivering goods and people for hundreds of years. Today, you can take a water taxi from one part of town to another, and many people live in houses right along the water. Some people live on the canal in houseboats.

After the United States, The Netherlands is the second largest exporter of food in the world. They are the number one producer of onions and they export ¼ of the world’s tomatoes. The mild climate and flat and fertile soil help the Dutch grow a variety of fruits and vegetables, and more than half the land in The Netherlands is used as farmland. They grow tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers in greenhouses, and grow sugar beets, winter corn, potatoes, onions and barley on the farmland.

DID YOU KNOW?

“Netherlands” means “low country.”
LEARNING ACTIVITIES

LIFE ON THE FARM (GRADES PREK-1)

Explore the ways animals move and sound. Read Spot on the Farm or another book that features a variety of familiar farm animals. After reading through the story, go back and talk about what sound each farm animal makes. Have students explore making all the different sounds. Next, have students explore how each animal moves. What is different about the way a pig moves versus a cow? What is similar? Can you tell what animal someone is without using sound? Use pictures in the book to help students identify similarities and differences. After exploring movement, have each student silently pick a farm animal that they want to be. Have them move around with no sound and see if they recognize other animals like them in the room. Add in sound and let all the animals that are alike find each other and form a herd or flock together. Try it again with different animals. Try having one person be Spot and gently herd all the animals that are alike into one corner of the room.

Extender: Have each student draw their animal making its sound. Place all the drawings together on a bulletin board. Have students draw and color in pieces of fence to create pens for all the animals in the farmyard.

TEAM WORK (GRADES K-1)

Spot and Helen are good friends who work together well. Have students do a simple drawing of their face showing all of their features (eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hair, etc.). Next, pair students up. On a new piece of paper, have each student draw one of their eyes. Partners then trade drawings and add one feature for each other. Keep trading back and forth to complete each face. Have students compare the drawing they did by themselves to the drawing they did with their partner. What is the same between them? What is different? What was fun about doing the drawing together? What was challenging?

Extender: Pass drawings around circle so all classmates get to contribute to each face.

LIFT-THE-FLAP (GRADES 1-2)

Read one or more Spot books aloud to the class. Have students draw a large picture showing their favorite activities, like different games they like to play at recess or after school. Take smaller pieces of paper and tape the top edge of the paper over part of the picture to form a flap. Let students decide which parts of they want to hide. Place them in part of the room so everyone has a chance to look at everyone else’s lift-the-flap stories. If time, have a discussion about what each story is about, based on what each student sees.

Extender: Have students write a line of text on each drawing explaining what they are doing in the picture, for example “I like to eat cereal” or “Blue is my favorite color.”

WHAT ARE THEY CALLED? (GRADES 1-2)

Groups of animals are known by different words. Have students make up their own and then compare to the examples below.

- litter of puppies
- charm of hummingbirds
- stable of horses
- passel of pigs
- drove of sheep
- string of ponies
- brace of ducks
- kindle of kittens
- brood of chickens
- swarm of bees
- sloth of bears
- army of frogs
PRE PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do you know about Spot? Have you read or listened to any Spot books? Looking at the pictures in the study guide, what do you think will happen in the show?
- Have you read other books about animals or dogs? What are your favorite dog or animals stories?
- Do you have a dog or other pet? What kind of pets do your friends and family have?
- Do you have a favorite song that you like to sing? What is it? Do you know any songs about animals?

POST PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What did you see the different puppets doing during the show?
- Did you see the puppeteers? What did they look like? What did they do during the performance?
- Did you have a favorite part of the show? Was there a part you did not like? What questions do you still have about the show?

VOCABULARY

Canals: a narrow river or stream built by people that allows passage of boats into the middle part of a country; canals are also built to help bring water to crops
Career: the job that someone does over a period of time
Civilian: a person not on active duty with the army or other branch of the military
Delta: a triangular area made of sand found at the mouth of a river
Dikes: tall sections of dirt or concrete set up to hold back water and keep an area from flooding
Evacuate: to empty a dangerous place of people; move to safety
Fertile: land that can produce lots of vegetables and other crops
Greenhouse: a small building used for growing and protecting plants
Manipulate: to move, operate or handle something
Native: born or originating somewhere
Premiere: the first public showing of a play or piece of music
Puppeteer: someone who operates puppets or gives puppet shows
Regional: a characteristic of a particular area of a country
Translated: changed from one language into another language

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Activities and more! Fun With Spot
http://www.funwithspot.com/us/
Theater Terra’s website
http://www.funwithspot.com/us/ (use Google Translate to see English text)
http://www.kidsentertainment.net/roster/spot/