



2008~2009
 HOT SEASON FOR
 YOUNG PEOPLE PRESENTS

FARFALLE
“BUTTERFLIES”

T.P.O.
 Teatro d’Piazza o d’Ocassione



TEACHER GUIDEBOOK



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Watch a butterfly move.

The fluttering of its wings looks as if a paintbrush were painting on the air; but it also looks like a dance. This delightful dance sometimes lasts but a day. It all happens between dawn and sunset. And look: there is a landscape, in it there is an egg, a larva, a caterpillar, a butterfly, a swarm of butterflies. They are beautiful, colorful, they flitter in the wind, they whirr in your ear. They are ballerinas painting on air with their great wings.

In *Farfalle* (“*Butterflies*”) the audience is immersed in many folds of this life, “told” by two dancers moving inside a sensitive environment made of music and digital images.

The setting of this performance is simple: a white carpet and two large wings. The images are projected onto different planes: the horizontal plane of the carpet and the vertical plane of the slanted wings. A few stylized objects decorate the stage. At times the spectator is invited to take part, to enter the scene, to move in among images which react to a gesture, a movement. Images enfold the performers, immersing all in an ever-changing environment.

ArKtype Presents
Compagnia TPO

Farfalle (Butterflies)

Directed by Francesco Gandi, Davide Venturin

Teacher Guidebook

By Amanda Roche

Before the Performance

What you and your students should know about the performance	2
Shapes to Know and Watch For	3
Classroom Discussion Starters	3
Performance Description	4

Classroom Activities

Imaging and Moving Through an Immersive Environment	5
Interactive Movement and Sound	6
Creating an Immersive Life-Cycle Environment	7
Integration Ideas	8

About T.P.O. Company	9
Related Literature	10
Web Resources	10

A note from our Sponsor - Regions Bank

For over 125 years Regions has been proud to be a part of the Middle Tennessee community, growing and thriving as our area has. From the opening of our doors on September 1, 1883, we are committed to this community and our customers.

One area that we are strongly committed to is the education of our students. We are proud to support TPAC’s Humanities Outreach in Tennessee Program. What an important sponsorship this is – reaching over 25,000 students and teachers – some students would never see a performing arts production without this program. Regions continues to reinforce its commitment to the communities it serves and in addition to supporting programs such as HOT, we have over 43 associates teaching financial literacy in our classrooms this year.

Thank you, teachers, for giving your students this wonderful opportunity. They will certainly enjoy the experience. You are creating memories of a lifetime, and Regions is proud to be able to help make this opportunity possible.



Jim Schmitz
Executive Vice President
Area Executive
Middle Tennessee Area

You and your students should know...

The experience of T.P.O. Company's *Farfalle* ("Butterfly") will be new to most audience members. Unlike a traditional performance in which there is a definite separation between the audience and the stage, the setting and seating of *Farfalle* is designed to make the audience feel part of the performance. Entering the theater itself is the beginning of the experience and should be approached as if part of the performance. **All audience members will be asked to wait in the lobby** of Johnson Theater until approximately ten minutes before the show begins. Due to the sensitivity of the set, audience members will be required to remove their shoes and leave them in the lobby before entering Johnson Theatre. During the show, **some students will be invited to join the performers on the stage** and interact with the CCC. The performers have extensive experience in observing and selecting children to join them, and will be sensitive and sensible in their choices. Approximately 15 students will be chosen during each performance.

There is no intermission and the performance lasts approximately 50 minutes.



Parts of *Farfalle* are abstract, but there are several realistic shapes relating to the butterfly and its life cycle.

Look for:

Eggs

Leaves

Pupa/caterpillar

Cocoon

Butterfly wings

Proboscis/ curved butterfly tongue



The concept of beauty is integral to T.P.O. Company's work. Some classroom discussion starters:

Ask What is beauty? What is beautiful to you?

What places are beautiful? What is beautiful in nature? How can you make beauty?
How can you play with beauty?

How could you *tell* a story about a butterfly
without words?

Show students a painting of a natural environment. If you could *jump* inside
this painting, what would it be like? What would you do there?

Performance Description

Farfalle combines live performers, video and visual imagery, music and technology to create an imaginary and magical world of which the audience is a part. In immersive theater, the setting and the production are designed to make the audience feel they are within the environment of the performance rather than merely a

spectator. Audience members view the performance from seating on opposite sides of the stage area. Two curved white screens rise from the stage floor on either side and are canvasses for projected images and video, as is the white stage floor and even the costumes and bodies of the performers. Through sounds, movement and imagery, *Farfalle* traces the life cycle of the butterfly. At times surreal and abstract and at times as literal as a museum display, the imagery and action in *Farfalle* transform this biological story of life cycle and metamorphosis into stunning art.

There is very little spoken word in this performance. Sounds of insects, of caterpillar eggs hatching and other natural sounds are broadcast in surround sound to create the feeling of being immersed in the scene. The imagery on the stage floor and walls is



ever changing, morphing from swirling patterns and swathes of color to vivid eggs, crawling caterpillars and blooming flowers. At times the performers “draw” with light on the stage floor using a glowing, cocoon-like object as well as their hands, leaving luminescent purple lines. The lighting and imagery create the feeling of having entered a painting in which the images have come to life. Much of the show is choreographed and set, but there is some degree of improvisation as audience members are chosen and invited to leap from ever-changing circles, walk with caterpillars or enter a cocoon.

Imagining and Moving Through an Immersive Environment

In this activity:

Students will create imaginary, natural environments which they connect to the life cycle of the butterfly.

Preparation

Read “Harold and the Giant Garden” or another book in the *Harold and the Purple Crayon* series. Discuss how Harold used his imagination and his magic crayon to create different worlds that he could walk into.

Activity

1. Have students stand and imagine they have a magic crayon. Background instrumental music may help set the scene. Ask them to pretend to feel their crayon, to imagine the color. Imagine you have a magic crayon that can create an imaginary world that you can walk into. Students should individually “draw” magic doors or windows they can walk through into their imaginary worlds.
2. Think about making a garden for butterflies. Think about what colors you would use, what shapes. “Draw” it in the air with your magic crayon. How would you move through this butterfly garden? Imagine if you could wave your magic crayon and make all the colors around you change. Try it. Imagine you could make the ground beneath you change to different colors and shapes.
3. Pretend to be a butterfly egg. Show what shape you would make your body. Now imagine you are a caterpillar hatching out of that egg. How would you make your body look like a caterpillar? Draw a magic cocoon around yourself. Think about what color your cocoon is. Sleep inside your cocoon for a while. Break out of your cocoon and become a butterfly and fly around the garden.
4. Transform back to yourself, look for your classroom, draw a window around it, and climb back through.



Interactive Movement and Sound

In this activity:

Students will use concentration and locomotive activities to be a part of an environment that responds to visual cues and touch.

Preparation

* For PreK and possibly K, a good warm up to help them understand this activity might be “We’re Going on a Bear Hunt” follow along story with body sounds.

Activity

1. Have everyone sit in a large circle on the floor. Experiment with different sounds everyone can make at one time:
Wind noise with mouths
Clapping
Rubbing palms together
Patting legs
2. Pick two to four sounds to use that give some variety. Each sound is assigned a color – i.e. palms clapping = green, wind noise = blue. Practice making the sounds when the teacher holds up a piece of colored construction paper.
3. Remaining seated in a circle, divide class into two, three or four groups, depending on how many sounds you have chosen to work with. Each group is assigned a color/sound. Practice again with the holding up the colored paper and having the groups make their sound only when their color paper is held up. Younger students may need a small piece of colored paper to hold to help them remember their color. After students get this part down, you can begin holding up more than one color at a time to hear how the sounds work together.
4. Place the colored paper on the floor inside the circle. Begin with choosing one student to stand and move around the circle, touching the pieces of colored paper with their feet or other body parts. Anytime someone touches a color, that group makes their sound until the person takes his/her foot/hand/body part off the color. For older students, one or two additional “movers” can be added to the center of the circle to increase the concentration and complexity. Students can be encouraged to move in different ways inside the circle by asking them to combine slow and quick movements, high and low movements, add a turn, etc.

Variation for older students

Have one student change the set up inside the circle. One student continually picks up the “sound card” colored papers and places them in different areas within the circle as another student moves through the space, following.

Creating an Immersive, Life Cycle Environment

In this activity:

Students will learn about a phase of the life cycle of a particular insect or amphibian and creatively represent a phase in a three dimensional environment.

Materials

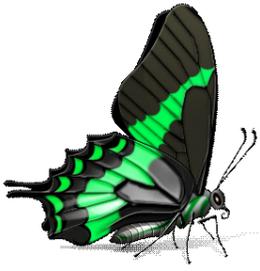
Gather boxes, construction paper, and other craft materials for students to use in constructing a diorama.

Preparation

Introduce or review the life-cycle phases of a butterfly or other animal.

Activity

1. Divide the class into small groups. Each group is assigned a phase in the life cycle of an insect or amphibian that undergoes metamorphosis. The butterfly is an ideal example, but other transformative insects or amphibians such as frogs will work.
2. Questions for the group to consider: What happens in this phase of the life cycle? What kinds of shapes do you think about when you think about this phase? What colors? Would it be light or dark? What else would be needed in this phase of the life cycle? (i.e. a quiet, dry environment, leaves, sunlight, etc.) What could you add to make this phase beautiful?
3. In groups, create a diorama showing this phase of the life cycle in an artistic way. Using construction paper, gift wrapping paper, markers or paints, pick solid colors or pattern for the inside walls of the box. On separate sheets of paper, draw and cut out shapes that help tell what phase of the life cycle this is and place them in the box. There can be multiple representations of shapes significant to this stage -- eggs, wings, leaves, etc. Encourage students to experiment with making several different colors of wings, for instance, or different sizes of eggs. Three dimensional objects such as leaves, sticks and flowers can be used as well.
4. Some of the shapes in each diorama should be hanging from strings attached to the top of the box to allow for movement and to make use of the entire space within the box.
5. Shine a flashlight into the box and move it around. What does this do to the shadow? Blow on the hanging shapes and notice the effect.
6. Now imagine this box was the size of this room and you could walk around inside it. What kinds of sounds would you hear? How would it feel to be inside it? How would you make some of the shapes move?



Science project: Raising monarch butterflies

If you haven't done so already, raising butterflies in the classroom is an exciting and informative project. There are several butterfly kits available online, and kits are also sold at local Parent Teacher Stores. Spring is the optimal time for raising and releasing butterflies.

Brief Experiences in the Arts

(5 – 15 minutes)

Making a Nature Soundscapes

What insect and/or animal noises do you hear outside in the daytime? What do you hear outside at night? As a group, explore creating nature sounds with your hands, bodies and voices. Here is an example of a structured group nature sound:

This rainstorm can be done with no verbal cues other than simply, “follow me.”

Hold one finger up and tap it slowly on palm of your other hand

Hold up two fingers, then tap faster with two fingers

Hold up three fingers, tap faster with three fingers

Hold up four fingers, tap as fast as you can with all four

To make the rainstorm let up, reverse the steps

You can add to this activity by placing some of the students on the perimeter of the room and having others in the center with their eyes closed, noting the difference when the sound surrounded them.

Create an Immersive Environment with Natural Objects

(May be done individually, in small groups or as a whole class project)

Collect leaves, flowers, rocks and other natural objects and, using a shoebox or other small container with an open end on one side, create a magical world for an insect (The insect need not be live!). This world can continually change with the daily addition, subtraction or relocation of objects within it. You could also trace the life cycle of the butterfly and have the class change the environment with each phase of the life cycle, considering what the egg/caterpillar/chrysalis/butterfly would need and enjoy during that phase.

Human Metamorphosis Visual Art Project

Discuss what metamorphosis means. Imagine you are like a caterpillar that goes into a cocoon and comes out as something very different. If you went into a cocoon just like you are, what might you look like when you came out? Draw a picture and use descriptive words to show and tell how you are different.

Integration Ideas

There are many ways the performance of *Farfalle* can integrate with your classroom activities. These suggestions are flexible and can be adapted for various grade levels.

About T.P.O. Company

Italian-based T.P.O. Company began as a visual theatre company in 1981, using lighting design and artistic objects to create children's theater that was intensely visual. For the last decade the company has been under the artistic direction of Davide Venturini and Francesco Gandi and has brought an increasingly digital presence to its productions. The company experiments on an ongoing basis and often collaborates with artists of various genres. Collaboration between the artistic directors of T.P.O. Company, graphic designer Elsa Mersi and computer science engineers led to the creation of the Children's Cheering Carpet (CCC) which has become an integral part of the company's productions and installations. Through workshops and observations of children, T.P.O. Company researched how children play in a theatrical setting and interact with responsive technology. The CCC technology has enabled T.P.O. Company to integrate these discoveries in the design of their immersive, interactive theater experiences.



The CCC, described as a “sensory garden” through which the audience is taken on an imaginary journey, is a large mat placed over multiple sensors that respond to touch. The sensors are connected to a MIDI interface which is connected to computers linked to sound and projection devices. Using several projection devices, animated images are projected onto the mat and change when the performers or selected audience members move on the mat, as does the music and sounds. This allows for the performer or audience member to interact with and alter the environment. But far from becoming just a technical curiosity or playful experiment, T.P.O. Company blends this technology with music, choreography, story and beautiful imagery to transform the experience into art.

T.P.O. Company has toured extensively throughout Europe, and has also performed in Asia, Australia, South America and the United States, communicating with children through the universal languages of visual art, movement and theater.

Literature Resources

All of these titles are available at the Nashville Public Library



The Salamander Room by Anne Mazer

A boy finds a salamander in the woods and imagines how his room would change to create the perfect environment for his new friend.

Butterfly Story by Anca Hariton

Traces the life cycle of the Red Admiral butterfly, with watercolor illustrations.

Imagine a Night by Rob Gonsalves and Sarah L. Thomson

Introduces children to surrealism in painting with poetry inspired by atmospheric art.

Web Resources

T.P.O. Company:

www.tpo.it

The company's website has background information as well as video excerpts from various works, including *Farfalle*.

Monarch Butterfly Journey North

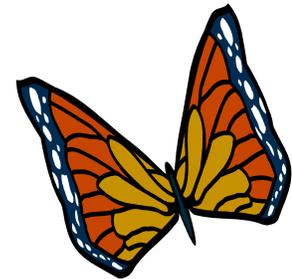
www.learner.org/jnorth/monarch

Information, maps, and videos of Monarch migration and life cycle.

Insect Lore

insectlore.stores.yahoo.net

Includes several products for sale to raise butterflies in your classroom.



The Teacher's Guide: Butterflies

www.theteachersguide.com/butterflies.htm

Diagrams, butterfly art and science lesson plans, printouts and more.

The Children's Butterfly Site

<http://www.kidsbutterfly.org/>

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