



ArtSmarts

2002-2003 School Matinee Series

Fred Garbo Inflatable Theater Co.

February 3, 2003 11:00 am
Mondavi Center, Jackson Hall, UC Davis, 11:00am

Dear Teachers:

We hope you will find this Teacher's Guide helpful in preparing your students for what they will experience at the Fred Garbo Inflatable Theater Co. performance matinee. The Guide provides background information on this one-of-a-kind theatrical performance. The Fred Garbo Inflatable Theater Co. matinee, which is specially designed for student audiences, will prove that balloons + mime + acrobatics + juggling = FUN!

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Fred Garbo Inflatable Theater Co.



Fast-paced, energetic, universally engaging and theatrically clever, **Fred Garbo Inflatable Theater Co.** has won the praise and affection of audiences worldwide. Gigantic inflatable props spring to life in the world of pneumatic wizard Fred Garbo and Brazilian ballerina Daielma Santos, a world that mesmerizes audiences with imaginative imagery and artistic foolishness. Rolling, gliding, tumbling, juggling, miming, bouncing, quaking, and dancing in sync to the music, this delightful duo will inflate spirits and open the audience's eyes in amazement. Fred Garbo Inflatable Theater Co. has toured in theaters worldwide for audiences of all types, transcending barriers of language, culture and age in a seamless, unique program.

Founder, FRED GARBO was paid for performing a card trick in 1974 and has been a professional performer ever since. On *Sesame Street* he was the acrobat inside Barkley the Dog. On Broadway, he was the chief juggler in the musical *Barnum*. Garbo has toured Europe, Hong Kong, and Australia with the Obie Award-winning *Foolsfire*. Whether tumbling for the New York City Opera at Lincoln Center or dancing with MOMIX in Brazil, Fred Garbo brings a gymnast's timing and an actor's presence to his Inflatable Theater Co.

Fred Garbo's artistic partner, DAIELMA SANTOS, was born in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Her training includes studies at the Royal Academy of Dance of London, Michigan University, and with director Tony Montanaro. In Brazil, Daielma Santos danced with *Studio de Dancas* and was principal ballerina with the *Opera Paulista II* dance company. Her performances span the Americas and Europe, both as choreographer and performer. From *The Nutcracker* to *The Inflatable Living Project*, Santos's choreography combines world-class artistry and technical brilliance with theatrical humor.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

IMAGINE! The performance begins when a ten-foot cylinder slithers onto the stage and implodes. Before long the entire audience is playing catch with gigantic inflatable props! The inflatables' colors are solid and bright, and most are simple geometric shapes—cubes, tubes, and flattened blobs, alone and in combination—so there is the sense that one has tumbled into a giant Toy Box. The big blow-up shapes shimmer, deflate, and bounce in a rainbow of colors.

Suddenly, a globulating red cube takes on a life of its own, rolling, gliding, tumbling in sync to the music, right up to the edge of the stage. The audience gasps, and the big block teeters dramatically on the brink, quaking and bulging and changing shape, then amazing everybody with a hilarious exit.

Next! A lovely ballerina dances a can-can. Her skirt starts to grow longer and longer, becoming a ball gown then a balloon engulfing her, spiriting her away.

Many of the mutant balloons the performers use are manipulated from the inside, which gives the “airbags” lifelike energies all their own. Since much of the necessary agility and timing are concealed from the audience’s view—hidden in plain sight—it’s easy to miss the fact that decades of study, training, and practice have made it seem effortless.

Enjoy the show!

THINK ABOUT IT!

Dear Students:

Talking with your teacher, friends, and family about a performance after attending the theater is part of the experience. When you share what you saw and felt you learn more about the performance. You can now compare ideas, ask questions and find out how to learn even more. Here are some questions to think about:

- 1) How would you describe a Fred Garbo Inflatable Theater Co. performance to a friend?
- 2) What did you like best about the performance and why? Was the program different from what you expected? How?
- 3) Write a poem or the lyrics to a song describing what it would feel like to move inside a giant balloon. What musical instruments would best represent your description? Kazoos??

ATTENDING THE THEATER

What is expected of student audiences at the matinee:

- Enter the auditorium quietly and take seats immediately (*note that all matinees now have reserved seating*);
- Show courtesy to the artist and other guests at all times;
- Demonstrate appreciation for the artist's work by applauding at the appropriate times;
- Refrain from making unnecessary noise or movements;
- Please eat lunch before or after the performance to avoid disruption;
- Relate any information acquired from the pre-matinee discussion to the new information gained from the matinee;
- Please do not use flash photography.

What you can expect of your experience in a performing arts theater:

A theater is a charged space, full of energy and anticipation. When the house lights (the lights that illuminate the audience seating) go down, the excitement level goes up! Theaters are designed so that the voices of the singers and actors and the music of the musicians can be heard. But this also means that any sound in the audience: whispering, rustling of papers, speaking and moving about, can be heard by other audience members and by the performers. Distractions like these upset everyone's concentration and can spoil a performance.

The performers on stage show respect for their art form and for the audience by doing their very best work. The audience shows respect for the performers by watching attentively. Applause is the best way for audience members to share their enthusiasm and to show their appreciation for the performers. Applaud at the end of a performance! Sometimes the audience will clap during a performance, as after a featured solo. Audience members may feel like laughing if the action on stage is funny, crying if the action is sad, or sighing if something is seen or heard that is beautiful. Appreciation can be shown in many different ways, depending upon the art form and the culture(s) of the people in the audience. While the audience at a dance performance will sit quietly, other types of performance invite audience participation.

This Teacher's Guide was written by Anett Jessop,
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