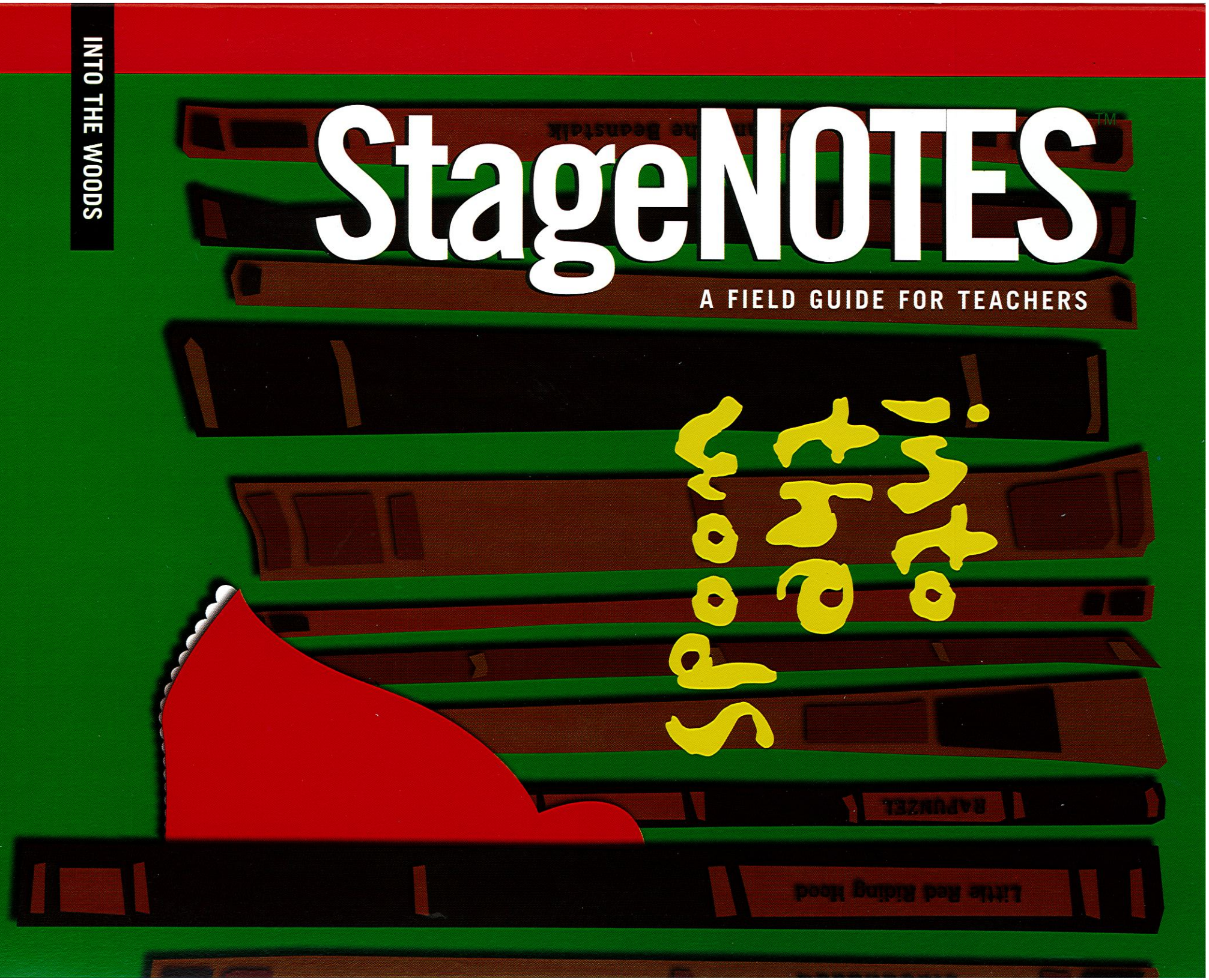
INTO THE WOODS

StageNOTES™

A FIELD GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



© 2002, Camp Broadway LLC
All rights reserved

This publication is based on the work of *Into the Woods* with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by James Lapine. The content of the *Into the Woods* edition of StageNOTES™: A Field Guide for Teachers is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all other countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations. All rights regarding publishing, reprint permissions, public readings, and mechanical or electronic reproduction, including but not limited to, CD-ROM, information storage and retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved.

Printed in the United States of America
First printing, April 2002

ISBN: 1-930504-07-1

To inquire about *Into the Woods* performance rights, contact:

Music Theatre International
421 West 54th Street, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10019
Telephone: (212) 541-4684
Facsimile: (212) 397-4684

For more information on StageNOTES™ and other theater arts related programs for students, contact:

Camp Broadway LLC
145 West 45th Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10036
Telephone: (212) 575-2929
Facsimile: (212) 575-3125
Email: tocampbway@aol.com
www.campbroadway.com

StageNOTES™

A FIELD GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

into the woods

CAMP BROADWAY LLC
NEW YORK

Letter from the Producer

Cinderella, Jack and the Beanstalk, Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel. You can find these fairy-tale characters everywhere, from simple bedtime stories, to cartoons, television and movies — even theme parks have been built around these familiar tales and characters.

Why do they have such an enduring hold on our imaginations? What is it in the story of a girl who gets her wish to go to the ball, or a boy who climbs a beanstalk and finds a giant, that has gripped countless generations?

Into the Woods brings all these characters together — along with princes, wolves and a witch — to dig beneath the surface of these stories and find out what happens after happily ever after. The fairy-tale heroes and heroines chase after their own wishes, never really stopping to think about what the consequences of their actions might be, until they find themselves defending their kingdom from the attack of a giant who, rightly or wrongly, is bent on seeking revenge.

Every generation finds its own meaning in fairy-tales. Today, we might see a parallel to world events in the story of a land ravaged by a powerful giant wreaking havoc and destruction. The band of adventurers in *Into the Woods* join together, doing their best to rebuild their community in a spirit of tolerance and acceptance, even when the future seems darkest. It seems that today we are all reaching out to find comfort in family and community, as we struggle through the dark forests of the world.

We hope that this new production of *Into the Woods* can bring all of us together in the theater, to greet familiar characters and meet new ones, to laugh, to wonder, (and even be a little bit scared) as we set off on a new journey through ageless terrain — *Into the Woods.*

The Story

ONCE UPON A TIME, there was a girl named Cinderella, a boy named Jack, and a humble Baker and his Wife. Cinderella wished to go to the King's Festival, Jack wished that his pet cow Milky-White would give milk, and the Baker and his Wife wished they might have a child.

The Witch next door reveals that the Baker and his Wife are under a curse which has kept them childless. Long ago, the Baker's father stole rampion from the Witch's garden for his expectant wife: the Witch caught him, and demanded their newborn daughter, whom she named Rapunzel. The Baker's father also stole the Witch's magic beans, which brought a curse upon his entire family. To break the curse, the Baker must bring the Witch a cow as white as milk, a cape as red as blood, hair as yellow as corn, and a slipper as pure as gold.

After many misadventures in the woods, the Baker and his Wife obtain Jack's cow, Little Red Riding Hood's cape, Rapunzel's hair, and Cinderella's golden slipper. The spell is broken and the couple's wish to have a child is granted.

Cinderella and Rapunzel marry their Princes, Jack finds riches in the land of the giants, and everyone in the kingdom seems certain to live happily ever after.

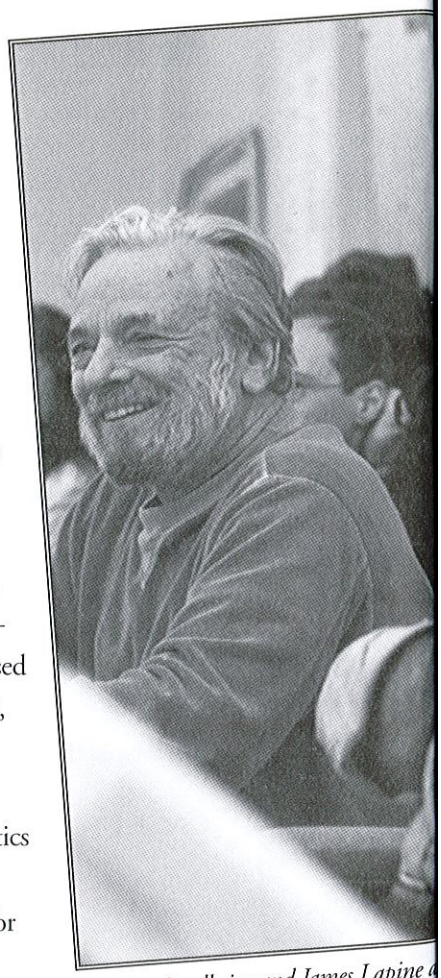
ONCE UPON A TIME... LATER, Cinderella dwells in the palace, wealthy Jack lives with his mother and his cow, and the Baker and his Wife raise their new baby. Everyone's happiness is interrupted when a Giant (the angry widow of the giant Jack killed) attacks the kingdom.

The characters again flee into the woods. Many fall victim to the Giant's fury: the Narrator of the story, Rapunzel and even the Baker's beloved Wife are killed by the wrathful Giant.

The Baker, Cinderella, Little Red and Jack band together to battle the Giant and save the kingdom. In the aftermath of the Giant's rampage, they come together as a family, along with the Baker's child, to build a new life after "happily ever after."

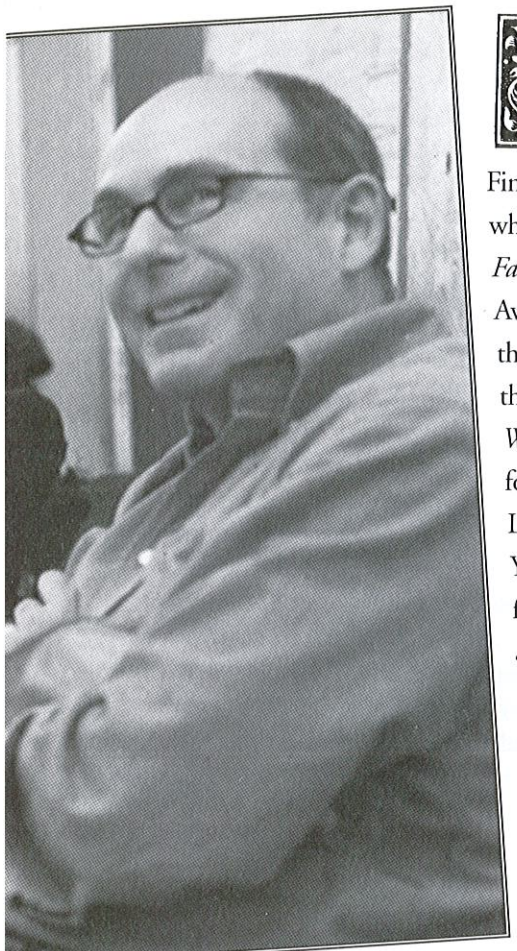
It Takes Two
Stephen Sondheim and James

Stephen Sondheim (music and lyrics), one of the most influential and accomplished composer/lyricists in Broadway history, was born in New York City and raised there and in Pennsylvania. As a teenager he met Oscar Hammerstein II, who became Sondheim's mentor. Sondheim graduated from Williams College, where he received the Hutchinson Prize for Music Composition. After graduation, he studied music theory and composition with Milton Babbitt. He worked for a short time in the 1950s as a writer for the television show *Topper*; his first professional musical theatre job was as the songwriter for the unproduced musical *Saturday Night.* He wrote the lyrics for *West Side Story* (1957), *Gypsy* (1959) and *Do I Hear A Waltz?* (1965), as well as additional lyrics for *Candide* (1973). In addition to writing music and lyrics for *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way to the Forum* (1962), he wrote music and lyrics for *Anyone Can Whistle* (1964), *Company* (1970 – New York Drama Critics Circle Award and 1971 Tony Awards® for Best Musical, Best Music, Best Lyrics), *Follies* (1971 – Tony Award® for Best Score and New York Drama Critics Circle Award; revised in London, 1987), *A Little Night Music* (1973 – Tony Award® for Best Score), *The Frogs* (1974), *Pacific Overtures* (1976 – New York Drama Critics Circle Award), *Sweeney Todd* (1979 – Tony Award® for Best Score), *Merrily We Roll Along* (1981), *Sunday In The Park With George* (1984 – New York Drama Critics Circle Award; 1985 Pulitzer Prize for Drama), *Into The Woods* (1987 – Tony Award® for Best Score), *Assassins* (1991) and *Passion* (1994 – Tony Award® for Best Score). He composed the songs for the television production "Evening Primrose" (1966), co-authored the film *The Last of Sheila* (1973) and provided incidental music for Broadway's *The Girls of Summer* (1956), *Invitation to a March* (1961) and *Twigs* (1971). *Side By Side By Sondheim* (1976), *Marry Me A Little* (1981), *You're Gonna Love Tomorrow* (1983; originally presented as *A Stephen Sondheim Evening*) and *Putting It Together* (1993) are anthologies of his work as composer and lyricist. He has written scores for the films *Stavisky* (1974) and *Reds* (1981), and composed songs for the film *Dick Tracy* (1990 – Academy Award® for Best Song). He is on the Council of the Dramatists Guild, the national association of playwrights, composers and lyricists, having served as its president from 1973 until 1981, and in 1983 was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 1990 he was appointed the first Visiting Professor of Contemporary Theatre at Oxford University.



Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine a

Lapine



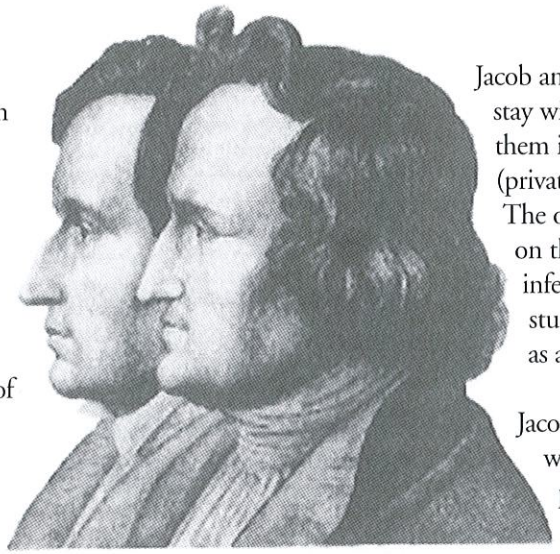
t rehearsal for Into the Woods.

James Lapine (book and direction) wrote and directed *Passion*, music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, in 1994, winning the Tony Award® for Best Book of a musical. With William Finn, he wrote and directed *A New Brain* (1998), as well as *Falsettos* for which they won the Tony Award® (for Book) in 1992. In 1990, *Falsettoland*, the second part of *Falsettos*, won the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Musical. In 1988, Mr. Lapine won the Tony Award® for the Book of *Into the Woods*, as well as the Drama Desk Award (Book) and the New York Drama Critics Award. The London production of *Into the Woods* won the Evening Standard Award and the London Critics Award for Best Musical in 1991. For *Sunday in the Park with George*, Mr. Lapine won two Drama Desk Awards for Book and Direction, the New York Drama Critics Award for Best Musical and the 1985 Pulitzer Prize for Drama with Stephen Sondheim. The London production of *Sunday in the Park with George* won the Olivier Award for Best Musical. In 1980, *Table Settings*, which he wrote and directed, won the George Oppenheimer Playwriting Award. In 1979, he wrote and directed *Twelve Dreams* (Public Theatre). In 1978, he won an Obie award for his first production, *Photograph by Gertrude Stein*, which he adapted and directed.

Mr. Lapine's extensive directing credits include: *A Winter's Tale*, 1988 (Public Theatre); *Merrily We Roll Along*, revised version, 1985 (La Jolla Playhouse); *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1982 (Delacorte Theatre) and *March of the Falsettos*, (the first act of *Falsettos*), *1981* (Playwrights Horizons). In film he has directed *Life With Mikey* (1993) and *Impromptu* (1991). In 1988, he directed *Into the Woods* for PBS American Playhouse.

James Lapine was born in Mansfield, Ohio. He received a B.A. in History from Franklin and Marshall College and an M.F.A. in Design from California Institute of the Arts. Prior to moving into the theatre, he worked as a professional photographer and graphic designer, as well as an architectural preservationist, at the Architectural League of New York before moving full-time to New Haven and designing graphics for the Yale Repertory Theatre and teaching design at the Yale School of Drama.

Children Will Listen
The Brothers Grimm and the



For more than five hundred years, from the 13th century to the end of the 18th century, the German people suffered from a deep rooted sense of cultural inferiority. Germany was not a unified nation; it was comprised of many small squabbling states, with no center of cultural activity, and no standard language.

While Italy, England and France were fertile beds of artistic creativity during the Renaissance, Germany lagged behind. German rulers were convinced of France's superiority; Frederick the Great of Prussia preferred to speak French rather than German.

Around 1770, there was a resurgence of national pride and patriotic feeling; artists and scholars began to take an interest in German folk songs and stories. The Brothers Grimm were born just as this German nationalism was reasserting itself.

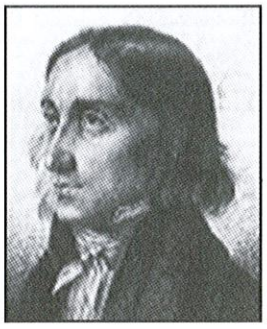
Philipp Grimm, a successful lawyer, and Dorothea Zimmer Grimm, a town councilman's daughter, had a family of six children. The eldest were Jacob, born in 1785, and Wilhelm, born one year later. Philipp Grimm was employed by the Count of Hanau, and the family lived happily in a spacious government residence.

However, tragedy struck, just as in many of the tales that the Grimm brothers would later publish. In 1796, Philipp Grimm suddenly died; Dorothea and the children were forced to leave their home, struggling to survive with very little money.

Jacob and Wilhelm were sent to stay with an aunt, who enrolled them in the prestigious Lyzeum (private high school) in Cassel. The other boys looked down on the Grimms as social inferiors; Jacob and Wilhelm studied for ten hours a day as a refuge from loneliness.

Jacob was shy, while Wilhelm was more outgoing and popular with girls. Unfortunately, the exhausting studies brought on severe asthma, which left Wilhelm weak for most of his life.

A young professor, Friedrich Carl von Savigny, impressed by the boys' academic dedication, allowed them to study in his private library. They were fascinated by epic stories and tales of heroes; they decided to study German medieval literature, rather than attend law school as had been expected of them.



Friedrich Carl von Savigny

After graduating from the University of Marburg, they both became librarians; although overworked and underpaid, they were able to indulge their love of reading and research.

Following the trend of interest in native German culture, Jacob and Wilhelm began to study folk stories. They were intrigued by the tales that had been passed along by women sewing and spinning together, most of which had never been written down. These fairy-

History of Fairy Tales

stories were dismissed by many as unfit for intelligent minds, belonging to the realm of ignorant superstition. However, the brothers believed these stories to be relics of authentic German culture, and began collecting the tales into one volume.

By the time they were ready to publish their story collection, the Grimms brothers were literally starving, living on one meal a day. Their book, **Kinder- und Hausmärchen**, *Children's and Household Tales*, written primarily for scholarly adults, was moderately successful. The Grimms eventually realized that the book was most popular with children.

In 1825, the brothers published the illustrated "Small Edition" especially for children, which became a huge popular success. For the next thirty years, Wilhelm continually refined the stories, adding morals to the tales, and reshaping them to adhere to the stern Christian morality of the time.

The brothers published more than 35 books. Besides their *Household Tales*, they collected folktales of other countries, and wrote on German history, language and culture. They became university professors, and ultimately were admitted to the Academy of Sciences in Berlin. Jacob left the fairy tales to his brother, while pursuing his lifelong ambition: the creation of a German language dictionary.

Wilhelm died of an infection in 1859. In his eulogy, Jacob called him "Märchenbruder," or "fairy-tale brother." Jacob died four years later, still at work on his dictionary.

Grimm's Fairy Tales has been translated into 160 languages; in the United States, there are more than 120 different editions. Since its initial appearance, Grimm's Fairy Tales has been one of the world's most widely published books, exceeded only by the Bible.

Although originally intended as a monument to German folk culture, the Grimm's masterpiece has transcended national boundaries, becoming a cornerstone of children's literature the world over.

Before the Brothers Grimm

Collections of fairy tales appeared in Italy and France more than one hundred years before the Brothers Grimm set about collecting German folk stories.

The Pentamerone, published in five volumes between 1634 and 1636 by Giambattista Basile, was a collection of fifty traditional tales told by Neapolitan townswomen, and included versions of "Cinderella," "Snow White," "Sleeping Beauty" and "Beauty and the Beast." It was written in Neapolitan dialect, and was not translated into English and German until the mid-1800s.

In 1697, retired French civil servant Charles Perrault published one of the most well-known collections of fairy tales, *Histoires ou contes du temps passé (Stories or Tales of Past Times)*. The eight stories included "Cinderella," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Sleeping Beauty," and "Puss In Boots." (Comparisons of the Italian and French volumes indicate that Perrault wasn't aware of Basile's versions.) Perrault originally did not want his name connected with the book, attributing it instead to his son, Pierre. It was only after both father and son had died that the printer correctly identified Charles as the author.

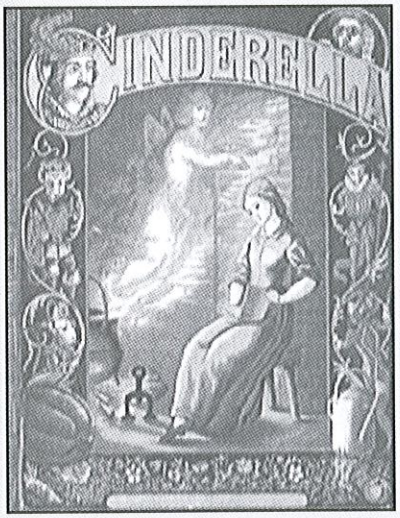
HISTOIRES
OU
CONTES
DU TEMPS PASSE.
Avec des Moralitez.
A PARIS,
Chez Claude Barbin, sur le second Peron de la Sainte-Chapelle, au Palais.
Avec Privilege de Sa Majesté.
M. DC. XCVII.

In 1729, they appeared in an English edition, with an illustration of three children listening to an old woman under a sign reading "Mother Goose's Tales."

Ever After...
The Origins of Cinderella &

Cinderella

Almost every culture on the globe has a version of the Cinderella story; there are 500 variations of the story in Europe alone. The heroine goes by the name Cinderella, Cinderwench, Aschenputtel, Ashypet, Cendrillon, Cenerentola, Pepelluga, or Allerleirauh, to name a few. She receives magical aid from the spirit of her mother in a tree, a fairy godmother, a magical bird, or even an enchanted cow. She attends the King's festival in slippers of gold, glass, embroidered silk, or fur.



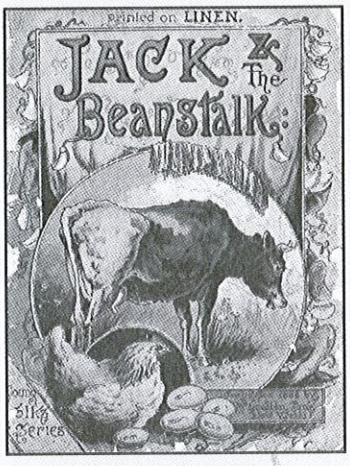
Historians believe that when he was recording the oral version of "Cinderella," Charles Perrault changed "pantoufle de vair" (slipper of fur) to "pantoufle de verre" (slipper of glass), giving his heroine unique, if fragile, footwear.

The earliest appearance of the rags-to-riches tale of a girl and her cruel stepfamily was in ninth-century China. Charles Perrault introduced the character of the fairy godmother who comes to the rescue of a passive Cinderella. The Brothers Grimm's Aschenputtel is more active: she plants a tree at her mother's grave, waters it with her own tears, and in her time of need, shakes it to receive a dress and slippers. Aschenputtel's stepsisters have their eyes pecked out as punishment for their wickedness, while the gentler Perrault simply lets them writhe in jealousy.

Jack and the Beanstalk

Jack first appeared around 1708, in Jack and the Gyants. Set in Cornwall (in southwestern Britain), Jack was a farmer's son who lived during King Arthur's reign. The fearsome giants (with names like Cormilan, Blunderboar, Thunderdel and Galigantus) are killed in violent, bloody episodes that thrilled the readers of the cheaply printed "chapbooks." Jack meets King Arthur, becomes a Knight of the Round Table, and takes a noble wife.

The beanstalk became part of the story by the 1730s, in Jack Spriggins and the Enchanted Bean. Jack gets the magic bean from his grandmother, climbs the mile-high stalk, and comes to a tavern where he battles the giant Gogmagog and takes his riches (along with a thousand girls intended for the giant's breakfast).



Tales of Welsh and Cornish giants were common, because there were many cases of real-life "giants" in that part of England. Anthony Payne was 7 foot 2 inches tall, and could carry a man and a donkey on his shoulders. The soldier "Long Laugherne," John Laugherne, 7 feet 6 inches in height, carried a sword that required two normal-sized men to lift it.

FACTOID

Every day 1,300 new stepfamilies are formed in the United States.

FACTOID

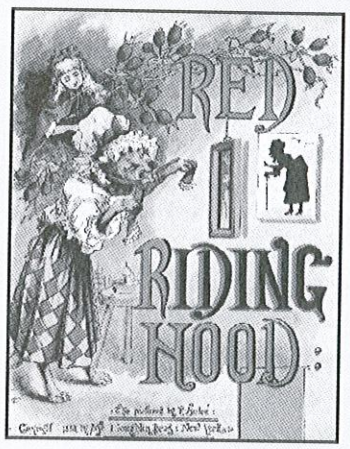
The castor bean plant has been known to grow 15 feet or more in a single season.

Co.

Little Red Riding Hood

The earliest tellings of this tale of a girl menaced by a wolf contained no mention of a red hood. The story originated in sewing circles in southern France and northern Italy, and is more graphic and bloody than the commonly known version of today.

A peasant girl encounters a werewolf in the forest, who asks her whether she will take the path of pins or of needles. The girl says she will take the path of needles (meaning she is learning to be a seamstress). The werewolf reaches her grandmother's house and devours the old woman; when the girl arrives, the disguised wolf offers her meat and wine -- the grandmother's flesh and blood. The girl sees through the disguise, and claims she has to go to the bathroom. The werewolf reluctantly allows her to crawl through the window with a rope tied to her ankle. The quick-thinking girl ties the rope to a fruit tree and makes her escape.



Normal wild wolves have never been known to kill human beings. However, in the 15th century, rabies swept across Europe, infecting the wolf population. Rabid wolves would attack humans, leading to a mass slaughter of wolves by frightened villagers. Today, wild wolf populations are almost extinct in both Europe and America.

In "Le Petit Chaperon Rouge" Perrault adds the familiar red hood, and changes the villain from a man in the shape of a wolf to an actual wolf. His Little Red is a spoiled, naive girl who challenges the wolf, and is ultimately swallowed up just like her grandmother. He also adds a moral to the story -- that girls who entice wolves deserve what they get. The Brothers Grimm, in "Rotkäppchen" ("Little Red Cap"), take the story one step further: a gamekeeper rescues Little Red and her grandmother, and they take their revenge on the wolf by filling his belly with stones.

Rapunzel

The story of Rapunzel comes from the Mediterranean. In Malta, the heroine is named Fenchelchen (fennel) or Petersilchen (parsley). In one version, while the girl is fleeing with her prince from the ogre-like witch, she casts red and white roses behind her, which turn into fire and a stream. In Basile's 1634 "Petrosinella" (parsley), instead of roses, she tosses oak galls, which become a dog, a lion, and a wolf, attacking the witch.

In France, a lady in waiting at the court of Louis XIV wrote her own version of the story, "Persinette" (parsley). The Brothers Grimm found a translation of this tale, and, believing it to be merely an elaborated version of an authentic German folktale, included it in their story collection.

In the story of Rapunzel, her expectant mother craves rampion. Rampion is a radish-like root vegetable which is cultivated in France, Italy and Germany. The peppery roots are boiled or eaten raw in salads along with the leaves. "Rapunzel" comes from the Latin name for rampion, rapunculus.

FACTOID

According to Pantone, Inc., blue ranks as consumers' favorite clothing color. Red ranks fourth, after green and purple.

FACTOID

Hair grows an average of 1/2 inch per month.

Moments in the Woods
A Chat with Cast Members

A conversation with cast members **Stephen DeRosa** (The Baker), **Molly Ephraim** (Little Red Riding Hood), **Amanda Naughton** (Cinderella's stepsister Lucinda), **Christopher Sieber** (Rapunzel's Prince) and **Adam Wylie** (Jack).

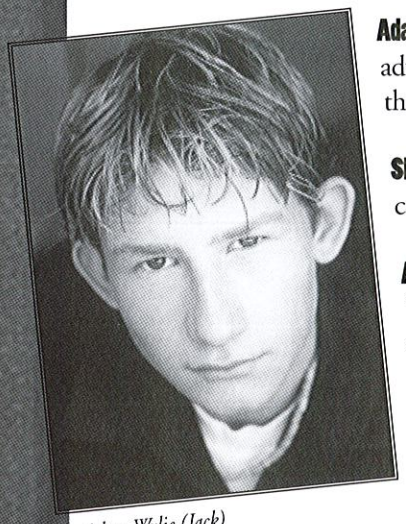
StageNOTES: The original production of *Into The Woods* opened in 1987. What are the challenges of appearing in a revival?

Stephen DeRosa: If you've seen the production or you listen to the soundtrack or you watch the video you get a head start, an idea of what the original creators had in mind. That is an advantage, but it also can be a handicap.

Christopher Sieber: It's actually a challenge to not just repeat somebody else's performance, and to make it your own -- being scared that someone's going to say, "Oh, he's just copying."

Amanda Naughton: I think that was a big fear, initially, until we were living with the material and doing it every day long enough that it started to become ours.

CS: You make it your own. I think all of us have done that in this show.



Adam Wylie (Jack)

Adam Wylie: Well, I had kind of an advantage because I never really knew the original production that well.

SD: You were just born I think, when it came out -- ! [*laughter*]

AW: I had a lot of friends who said, "Oh, *Into the Woods*, I love that show," and I was like, "What's that?" I never really knew what it was about until I got that first audition. And I thought, maybe I should stay away from the video, and make my own interpretation when I went in. So, that's what I did.

SD: And you got cast, thank you very much. [*laughter*]

SN: Molly, you've played Little Red before [at the Arden Theatre Company in Philadelphia, in 2000.] What's it like doing it again?

Vanessa Williams (The Witch), Molly Ephraim (Little Red Riding Hood)

Molly Ephraim: It's weird. But it's interesting, because I think the character's changed from what I did before. Working with James Lapine, seeing what he has to say, it's interesting to do it twice. I think I had an advantage knowing the music before everyone else. The first day of rehearsal, Paul Gemignani [the musical director], starts ordering out music cues, and people had their eyes popping out.

SN: How difficult is the show for each of you?

ME: Having the stamina to get through the entire show is difficult enough for me!

SD: You're also a full-time student right now, so you have two jobs.

ME: Tutoring is about three and a half hours every day.

CS: Molly's doing fractions in her head. She's had long days, longer days than most of the cast, because of school.

AN: For me, the challenge is physical, it's the deck that we have to walk on, the stairs that we have to negotiate backstage. It's walking around on the set in the shoes that we wear.

from Into the Woods

AW: The shoes are awesome.

SD: They're paramount in this production. What's so amazing about Susan Hilferty's costume design, for an actor, is my clothes feel right. I could live in them, they don't feel like a costume. In the first act I'm in more of a fairy-tale outfit. In the second act, she's kept the elements of the fairy-tale costume, but she made it modern.

CS: And as the show progresses you get dirtier and dirtier. There are details that you may or may not notice, but she's thought them out and you can see them onstage.

Amanda Naughton (Cinderalla's Stepsister, Lucinda)

AN: With the journey that everybody goes through, they can't be shiny, spanky clean by the end.

SN: So every element contributes to the story.

SD: And every single person is dependent on every other person in the production. That not only makes it wonderful for the company, it's the living fulfillment of the theme of the play. That's another testament to the writers, who are quite extraordinary.

SN: What would each of you say is the theme of the show?

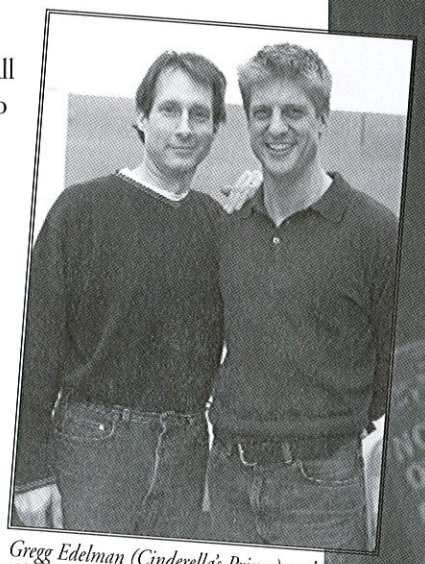
AW: I think, no matter how many mistakes that you make, or how bad things get, you can always make things right again. You always have a chance to redeem yourself.

ME: I think the whole idea is that your actions don't go unheard. Everybody's actions have a reaction.

SD: I think there's a notion that we are all responsible for each other. There are two sides to everything and that every time you pursue what you want, you have to take into account other people.

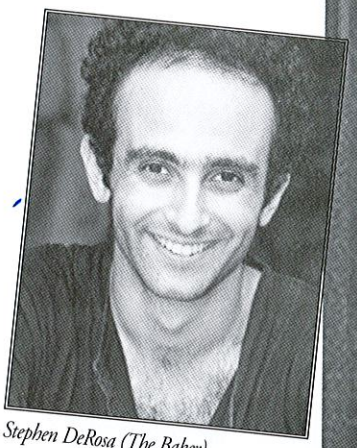
AN: It's the ripple effect of your actions.

ME: I think the show also has a different meaning after September 11th. We try keep it true to the story of *Into the Woods*, but we also have these little tidbits that we can bring to it.



Gregg Edelman (Cinderella's Prince) and Christopher Sieber (Rapunzel's Prince)

SD: When you're talking about something being a work of art as opposed to just being entertaining, I think it has to have a quality that I can only describe as transcendent. And I think that we experience it as actors in what Molly so brilliantly described as "little tidbits." There are moments -- moments in the woods -- when the play becomes bigger than just the story that you're telling, where the play becomes bigger than you, in a way. There are moments when you and the audience are experiencing something that has a deeper meaning than just what's being presented in front of you. And I think that's what makes a great work of art. And that's what fairy tales are meant to do. They were stories that the older people passed on to the younger people as a means of coping with the complexities of life. I think that's what all the great fairy tales have done, that's why fairy tales appear in every single culture. And the fact that Sondheim and Lapine have woven this together, and made it entertaining, and set it to music in a completely American way, it's quite an achievement. And I think we're all really proud to be part of it.



Stephen DeRosa (The Baker)

Maybe They're Magic
A Chat with designers Douglas

StageNotes: How did you begin working on the production?

Douglas W. Schmidt (set designer)**:** Well, obviously, we read the script, that's the first thing.

Susan Hilferty (costume designer)**:** Your first reaction has to be a visceral or emotional reaction, so you have a sense of what kind of story it is.

DS: The intention was to revisit this project and try to find other levels to it, new insights.

SH: One of the most exciting things about being a theater designer is that you actually create a totally intact world. We wanted a European sense to this world, but we also felt that for our audience to make a connection that it should feel American. So we use the 1700s as the root, but if anybody has an eye for fashion, they'll notice a real 1950s Christian Dior kind of cut to it.

DS: James Lapine had seen a pop up book of *The Wizard of Oz*, very elaborate -- every time you turned a page an entire city would come popping out of the book --

SH: All of us in the creative team carry a real love and passion for books. I'm a book junkie.

DS: So we took the spirit of the pop up books as our jumping off place, and made it a love letter to children's literature, and old Victorian editions of children's books in particular.

SH: We start with a book. The image is so beautiful, it hopefully makes everybody in the audience go, wow! And then you hear those words that mean "imagine": "Once upon a time..."

DS: Of course technically it's much easier to do something with a little piece of cut paper than it is when you've got a forty-foot wide canvas to fill.

SH: The houses at the beginning are really teeny, tiny, and the characters fill the world. And once the books move away, suddenly the woods become a huge, powerful place of mystery, a place of surprises, a place of discovery, where everything is strange.

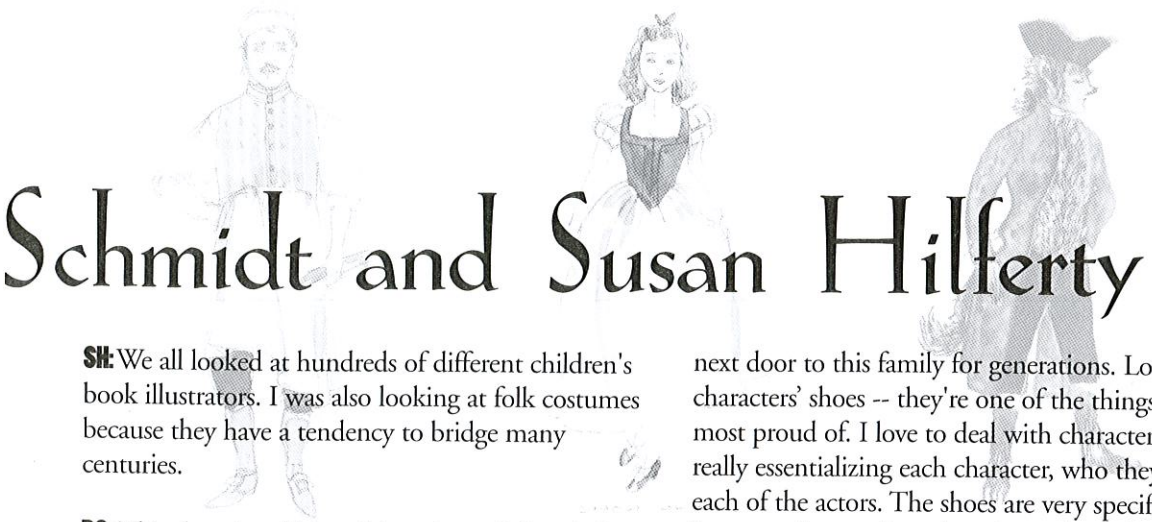
DS: I think the sense of the depth of the forest works particularly well in the second act, because in the first act, you have kind of this canopy of foliage that raises and lowers, but still gives you a roof. And in the second act, when we're in destruction and desolation mode, all that foliage has gone away, and you have a much more intimidating and overpowering sense of the forest.

SH: For me the most brutal image, since I'm so passionate about books, is to see Rapunzel's tower --

DS: The whole book of Rapunzel comes on stage, and she is interred in her tower which is at the top of the spine --

SH: -- and after the giant has been through, it's all been ravaged, torn and burned. It's so shocking.

DS: Since the books actually appear on stage in giant form, I spent a lot of time looking at old bindings and at archives of bookmakers devices and so forth, and tried to get a real feel for the visual aspect of the books.

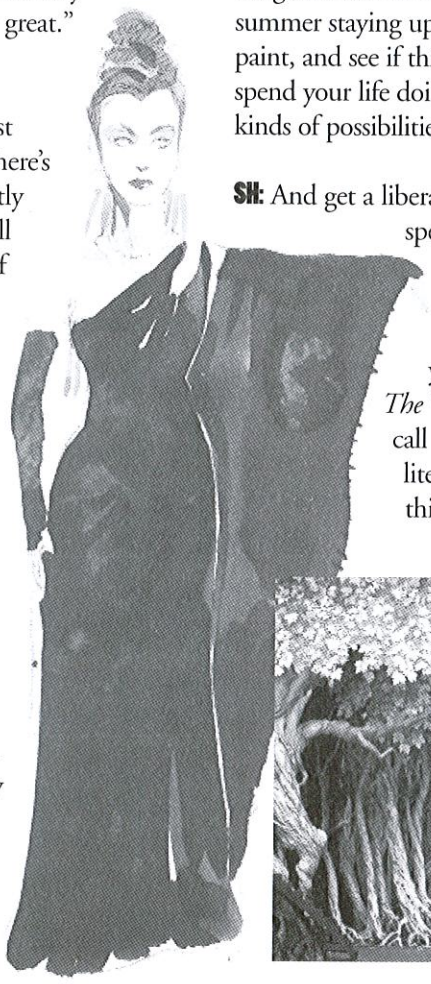


Schmidt and Susan Hilferty

SH: We all looked at hundreds of different children's book illustrators. I was also looking at folk costumes because they have a tendency to bridge many centuries.

DS: This show is a fable, a fairy tale, and the whole thing happens in a world of suspended reality. So you are called upon to do tricks that reinforce the fairy tale aspect of it. If you've done your job real well, they will seem spontaneous and will not call attention to themselves as just a technical trick.

For example, every time the Witch casts a spell and points her wand, there's a little puff of smoke. She does it so often that you start to believe that she can actually do this. I was talking to somebody who said, "That wand really works great." *[laughter]* The wand doesn't do anything. Every time there's a little explosion on stage -- and there must be, I don't know, forty of them -- there's a little explosive charge buried exactly where it's supposed to be, and it's all cued by a stage manager. It's a lot of drilling of holes and running of wires, and a big technical deal. But the idea is to make it seem like she's actually doing that.



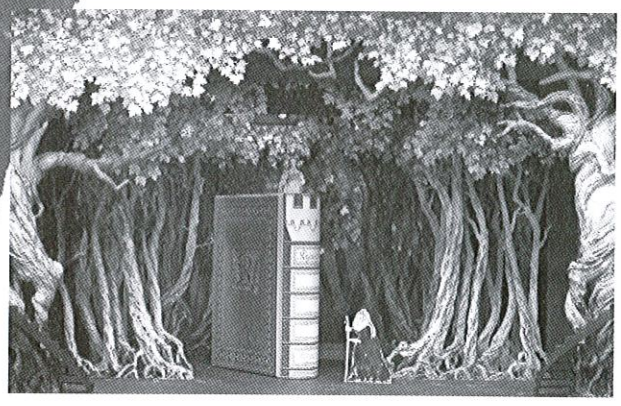
SH: The Witch's costume is probably the most complex, because she has to transform from her ugly state into her beautiful state, and it happens in a second right in front of the audience's eye.

We wanted the Witch to feel like she has been there for centuries and centuries. I went back to mythology for her, the Greek myths, as if she was this ancient, ancient witch who's just been living inexorably next door to this family for generations. Look at the characters' shoes -- they're one of the things that I'm most proud of. I love to deal with character, really, really essentializing each character, who they are, with each of the actors. The shoes are very specific: for instance, the stepsisters have huge, huge feet. The shoes are a nice punctuation of the individual characters.

SN: What advice do you have for students interested in theater design?

DS: Well, I would say, be involved in it in school, and see if this feels like something that you really want to pursue. And then do some intern work or volunteer at a regional theater or a stock company, and spend a summer staying up all night getting covered with paint, and see if this is really something you could spend your life doing. And if the answer is yes, then all kinds of possibilities will open up.

SH: And get a liberal arts education! Do NOT specialize in college. Science, history, literature, art, get it all. Writing is an essential part of it, and drawing. When you look at something like *Into The Woods,* as a designer, you have to call on everything from psychology to literature to history. All of those things have to be linked together.



I Know Things Now
Lessons for Educators

Discussion Exercise

Objective Students increase their understanding of ethics and the concepts of "good" and "evil."

From "Prologue: Into The Woods"
(Cinderella sings to herself as she does her stepsisters' hair)

CINDERELLA
Mother said be good,
Father said be nice,
That was always their advice.
So be nice, Cinderella,
Good, Cinderella,
Nice good good nice --

FLORINDA
Tighter!

CINDERELLA
What's the good of being good
If everyone is blind
And you're always left
behind?
Never mind, Cinderella,
Kind Cinderella --
(accenting each word with a
twist of a strand of hair)
Nice good nice kind good nice

FLORINDA
(screaming, slapping
Cinderella)
Not that tight!

CINDERELLA
Sorry.

FLORINDA
Clod.

From "I Know Things Now"

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD
And I know things now
Many valuable things
That I hadn't known before
Do not put your faith
In a cape and a hood
They will not protect you
The way that they should
And take extra care with
strangers
Even flowers have their
dangers
And though scary is exciting
Nice is different than good.

Exercise

Discuss Cinderella's plight, and her frustrated question, "What's the good of being good?" What does Little Red Riding Hood mean by "Nice is different than good?"

Teaching Tips

* What do we mean by "good"? Is someone "good" because of their beliefs? Their actions? Both or neither?
* Can someone be "nice" while not being "good"? "Good" but not "nice"?
* How does Cinderella express her anger (twisting and pulling her stepsisters' hair)? Does she have other options in her situation? How far should you go to make peace in a family, even when you feel you are "Cinderella"?
* Discuss Little Red Riding Hood's statement "Scary is exciting." Do we enjoy being scared (in movies, "thrill rides," ghost stories)? What draws us to things that are forbidden or unknown? When is something too scary?

Writing Exercise

Objective Students explore the concept of "morals," and stories as methods of teaching moral beliefs.

From "First Midnight"

BAKER
One midnight gone...

MYSTERIOUS MAN
No knot unties
itself.

WITCH
Sometimes the things
you most wish for
are not to be
touched ...

PRINCES
The harder to get,
the better to
have...

JACK
The difference
between a
cow and a bean
Is a bean can begin
an adventure ...

JACK'S MOTHER
Slotted spoons don't
hold much soup ...

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD
The prettier the
flower, the farther
from the path ...

Writing Exercise (cont'd)

Exercise

What is a "moral"? Do all stories have morals? Examine "Cinderella," "Little Red Riding Hood" and "Jack and the Beanstalk." Do you think these stories have a moral? Can they be interpreted differently by different readers?

Have students write their own version of one of these stories (or another familiar tale). They should include their own moral. The stories can be modernized or adapted to a particular genre (i.e. soap opera, action movie, detective story, etc.).

Teaching Tips

* Can a moral be implied?
* Why do we use stories (fables, parables) to make a point?
* Can you find a moral in a story even if an author did not intend to include one?
* Discuss current movies or television shows: what moral might someone find in these stories?

Experiential Exercise

Objective Students learn to defend and debate a given point of view.

From "Your Fault"

BAKER

(to Jack) It's because of you there's a Giant in our midst and my Wife is dead!

JACK

But it isn't my fault
I was given those beans!
You persuaded me to trade away
My cow for beans!
And without those beans
There'd have been no stalk
To get up to the Giants
In the first place!

BAKER

Wait a minute, magic beans
For a cow so old
That you had to tell
A lie to sell
It, which you told!
Were they worthless beans?
Were they oversold?
Oh, and tell us who
Persuaded you
To steal that gold.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

(to Jack) See, it's your fault.

Exercise

Have students prepare an episode of "Fairy Tale People's Court," using the following cases:

* Cinderella vs. her Stepmother
* Jack vs. the Giant
* Little Red Riding Hood vs. the Wolf
* Rapunzel vs. the Witch

Students should first decide who is the plaintiff and who is the defendant. For example, the Wolf may sue Little Red Riding Hood for injuries he sustained when his belly was cut open, the Giant may sue Jack for theft, or the Stepmother may sue Cinderella for emotional distress caused by Cinderella's deceit.

One student should be the judge, and be prepared to question both sides. Other students may be plaintiffs, defendants, witnesses, reporters, jury, spectators, and so on.

Each side should make its case as convincingly as possible, using "eyewitness testimony" (from Cinderella's stepsisters, Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother, etc.).

Teaching Tips

* Are there two sides to every story? Can any situation be spun in a different way?
* How do people justify their positions in a legal conflict? How can you persuade others that you are in the right?

Resources

BOOKS:

Banfield, Stephen. *Sondheim's Broadway Musicals.* University of Michigan Press, 1995.

Deane, Tony and Tony Shaw. *The Folklore of Cornwall.* Rowman and Littlefield, 1975.

Dundes, Alan. *Little Red Riding Hood: A Casebook.* University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.

Ellis, John M. *One Fairy Story Too Many: The Brothers Grimm and Their Tales.* University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Gordon, Joanne. *Art Isn't Easy: The Theater of Stephen Sondheim.* Da Capo Press, 1992.

Grimm, Jacob, Editor. *Grimms' Fairy Tales.* Grosset & Dunlap, 1995.

Jones, Merry Bloch and Jo Ann Schiller. *Stepmothers: Keeping It Together With Your Husband and His Kids.* Birch Lane Press, 1992.

Leach, Maria, ed. *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend.* Funk & Wagnalls, 1972.

Lüthi, Max. *Once Upon A Time: On the Nature of Fairy Tales.* Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1970.

Norwood, Perdita Kirkness and Teri Wingender. *The Enlightened Stepmother: Revolutionizing the Role.* Avon Books, 1999.

Schlesinger, Sarah. *The Music Theatre International Study Guide for Into the Woods.* Music Theatre International, 1989.

Secrest, Meryle. *Stephen Sondheim – A Life.* Delta, 1999.

Tatar, Maria. *The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales.* Princeton University Press, 1987

Zipes, Jack, ed. *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales.* Oxford University Press, 2000.

Zipes, Jack. *Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical Theories of Folk and Fairy Tales.* University of Texas Press, 1979.

MUSIC FEATURING STEPHEN SONDHEIM:

Into the Woods - Revival Broadway Cast featuring Vanessa Williams - Spring 2002.

Sondheim: A Celebration at Carnegie Hall – RCA, 1992.

A Collector's Sondheim (Musical Compilation) – RCA, 1985.

A Stephen Sondheim Evening – RCA, 1983.

VIDEOS FEATURING JAMES LAPINE:

Life with Mikey, starring Michael J. Fox and directed by James Lapine, 1993. Released by Disney Studios. (Rated PG)

Impromptu, starring Judy Davis and directed by James Lapine, 1991. Released by Hemdale Home Video I. (Rated PG-13)

WEBSITES:

www.intothewoodsbroadway.com
Official site of the Broadway revival

www.amazon.com
To purchase any of the merchandise listed

www.playbill.com
For the latest information and news on *Into the Woods*

RETAIL LOCATIONS:

Drama Book Shop
250 West 40th Street, NYC
(between 7th and 8th Avenues)
212-944-0595
www.dramabookshop.com

Theatre Circle Books
1 Shubert Alley
246 West 44th Street, NYC
(between Broadway and 8th Avenue)
212-586-7610
800-223-1320
www.BroadwayNewYork.com

into the woods

StageNOTES™
A FIELD GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

A Camp Broadway LLC Publication

Editor: Jodi Simon Stewart
Associate Editors: Roseanne Saraceno, Lesley Mazzotta
Art Director: Joseph M. Pisarchick

Writer: Robert Hartmann: *composer/lyricist and Assistant Professor, New York University Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program*

Copy Editor: Nancy Valentino: *editor specializing in theater, film and fashion*

For *Into the Woods*:

Costume Design: Susan Hilferty
Scenery Design: Douglas Schmidt
Lighting Design: Brian MacDevitt
Logo Design: Serino Coyne Inc.
Production Photos: Joan Marcus
Press: Boneau/Bryan-Brown

Special Thanks: Moira Deakin, Adriana Douzos, Susan Hilfterty, Amy Jacobs, Shanta Mali, Tim McDonald, Doug Schmidt, Alice P. Noodle

Printed by: Steady Printing & Graphics, Inc.

the BROADWAY junior COLLECTION®

THE BROADWAY JUNIOR COLLECTION™
MUSIC THEATRE INTERNATIONAL
421 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019
(212) 541-4684 • Fax (212) 397-4684
http://www.BroadwayJr.com (Website)
BroadwayJr@MTIShows.com (E-Mail)

ANNIE JR., BUGSY MALONE JR., FIDDLER ON THE ROOF JR., GUYS AND DOLLS JR., INTO THE WOODS JR., THE MUSIC MAN JR., ONCE ON THIS ISLAND JR., SCHOOLHOUSE ROCK LIVE! JR.

Now your students can present a real, live BROADWAY musical! Combine the thrill of dance with singing and acting through the magic of the ***Broadway Junior Collection****. Each title is condensed to 60 minutes, with pre-recorded performance music and sing along "guide vocals" making learning music simple and fun. Just add your choreography for an exciting evening of Broadway theatre!*