



Arts For All

Arts for All is a non-profit arts outreach organization serving in-need children ages 4-19. Our mission is to provide artistic opportunities to in-need youth communities in the greater New York City area. Through ARTS FOR ALL, professional artists work with children who have little means or opportunity to explore the arts due to economic disadvantages, physical and mental disabilities, hospitalization, socialization issues, emotional trauma, or any other life challenge. Arts for All is thrilled to be producing PigPen Theatre Company's "The Mountain Song" for our 2011 fall children's tour, and looks forward to serving over 2,500 children with this production.

PigPen Theatre Company

Back-to-Back 2010 and 2011 FringeNYC Overall Excellence Award winners, PigPen Theatre Company is an ensemble of seven young men who create atmospheric theatrical fables with their own unique blend of live music, puppetry, shadow play, choreographed movement, and clever lighting effects. This fall, PigPen is thrilled to bring "The Mountain Song" to NYC schools in association with Arts for All. The story, which is about a carpenter who loses touch with his daughter as she grows older, charms and dazzles audiences as he is given the impossible task of locating his own daughter's wedding. Follow his journey of mythical proportions as he takes to land, sea, and air, coming across giants, talking geese, man-eating coyotes, and even the deranged mayor of a ghost town. "The Mountain Song" was the runaway hit of this year's New York International Fringe Festival (the largest multi-arts festival in North America), earning critical praise from Time Out New York, Backstage, and The New York Times.

Everything the Arts for All children will see on stage is result of years of collaboration between seven recent Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama graduates:

(Alphabetically)

ALEX FALBERG (Ensemble Member): Alex was born in Kharkov, Ukraine and grew up in Shaker Heights, Ohio where he attended the University School. He graduated with a BFA in Drama from Carnegie Mellon University this past May. At Carnegie Mellon, Alex has been in productions including: HE WHO GETS SLAPPED (Mancini), THE ALICE PROJECT (White Knight), THE GRAPES OF WRATH (Connie), and BLIND ALLEY GUY - NOTES ON AN UNFINISHED EUGENE O'NEIL PLAY (Cassie). Alex is a banjo, mandolin, and piano player for PigPen.

ARYA SHAHI (Ensemble Member): Arya appeared in his first play in the 8th grade at St. Gregory College Preparatory School in Tucson, Arizona. By his senior year of high school he had been granted permission to design his own dramatic curriculum. He went on to study acting in a conservatory at The University of Arizona for two years before transferring to the Carnegie Mellon School of Drama. He has worked regionally as an actor and stage combatant. At CMU, Arya was seen in IN THE BLOOD (Jabber/Chili), HE WHO GETS SLAPPED (He), and THE GRAPES OF WRATH (Muley Graves), as well as several student pieces and new works. Arya is the percussionist for PigPen.



BEN FERGUSON (Ensemble Member): Ben was born and raised in Austin, Texas. His theater studies began in high school and continued at Carnegie Mellon. At CMU Ben has been seen in *THE GRAPES OF WRATH* (Floyd Knowles), *THERESE RAQUIN* (Laurent), *A MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM* (Puck), as well as many new works and student pieces. Ben is a guitar and banjo player for PigPen.

CURTIS GILLEN (Ensemble Member): Curtis was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Curtis attended CMU's Drama Pre-College Program before enrolling to the University. Past roles at Carnegie Mellon include Tiresias in *BURIAL AT THEBES*, Dobchinsky in *THE INSPECTOR GENERAL*, Alwa Schoning in *LULU*, and Bezano in *HE WHO GETS SLAPPED*. Curtis would like to thank his friends and family for their support. Curtis is a bass and ukulele player for PigPen.

RYAN MELIA (Ensemble Member): Ryan was born and raised in Acton, Massachusetts. Having done theater since an early age, the decision to attend Carnegie Mellon University's School of Drama was an easy one. In his time at CMU Ryan played Lysander in *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, Gordon in *DEAD MAN'S CELL PHONE*, and Al Joad in *THE GRAPES OF WRATH*. Ryan is a guitar, banjo, and fiddle player for PigPen.

DAN WESCHLER (Ensemble Member): Dan Weschler was born and raised in central PA before moving to Pittsburgh to get his BFA in theatre at Carnegie Mellon University. He has taught and directed children's theatre in Martha's Vineyard, Boston, and his home town of Hershey, PA. Some of his favorite roles include Oberon in *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, Noah Joad in *THE GRAPES OF WRATH*, and the Carpenter in *THE MOUNTAIN SONG*. He is the accordion and piano for PigPen.

MATT NUERNBERGER (Ensemble Member): Matt was born and raised outside of Chicago. Before attending Carnegie Mellon's School of Drama, he performed for two years in the Illinois High School Theatre Festival All State Musical, and attended NHSI's Theater Summer Program at Northwestern University. Matt has also taught and performed improv for The Improv Playhouse in Chicago. While at CMU, Matt was seen in *THE BURIAL AT THEBES* (Creon), *DEAD MAN'S CELL PHONE* (Dwight), *THE ALICE PROJECT* (White Queen), along with a one-man adaptation of Shakespeare's *RICHARD II*. Matt is a piano and guitar player for PigPen.