

About Figures of Speech Theatre

John and Carol Farrell founded Figures of Speech Theatre to explore the interplay of actors, puppets, masks, and movement. Believing that audiences experience art most vitally when they are called upon to engage their imaginations fully, the company produces visual theater that emphasizes myth, transformation, and surprise.

A touring company since 1982, Figures of Speech Theatre has performed for audiences from Caribou, Maine to Lima, Peru. Presenters of their work have included Broadway's New Victory Theater, The Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, Trinity Repertory Company, the Smithsonian Institution, Festival Theater in Sofia, Bulgaria, Internationalen Puppentage in Austria, Japan's Hitomi-za Theater, and EXPO Vancouver. The company has recently collaborated on major artistic projects with several organizations in its home state of Maine including Portland Stage Company (*Peer Gynt*), Heartwood Theater (*Gilgamesh*), Bates College (*Dragon's Daughter*), and the Portland Symphony Orchestra (*Magic of Christmas*). FST also conducts extensive teaching residencies for all ages (www.figures.org).

Figures of Speech Theatre is a four-time winner of the coveted "UNIMA Citation of Excellence," the highest award in American puppet theater: in 1986 for its production of *Anerca*, in 1989 for *Cupid and Psyche*, in 1997 for *Nightingale*, and in 2001 for *The Beanstalk Variations*.

Figures of Speech Theatre
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*FST is a not-for-profit institution,
and contributions are tax deductible.*

FIGURES OF SPEECH THEATRE

presents an adaptation of
Hans Christian Andersen's

Nightingale

Performed by: Carol Farrell as Oceanna
Andrea Goodman as the Countess Odessa

Directed by John Farrell

Story Adapted by Carol Farrell and Figures of Speech Theatre

Puppets, Costumes & Scenery by Carol and John Farrell

Scene Painting by Patrice Blake

Vocal Compositions by Andrea Goodman

Notes on *Nightingale*

In the mid 1800's, Hans Christian Andersen published a charming story about a little grey bird who saves an Emperor's life. We meet at first the Emperor, who is so cocooned by life in the court that he has no knowledge of the greatest treasure in his kingdom: the evening song of the Nightingale. Once he has heard the song, he seems continually torn -- between the world he knows at court, and the mystery of Nature which has begun to stir his heart. Through him we see a conflict played out in many of our own lives, as we try to find a balance between our hectic daily existence, and the deep need to connect, which keeps calling us back to the woods, the mountains, the sea.

As with all our work, we are interested in the layering of forms and ideas on stage, ways of seeing different realities at the same time. Hence *Nightingale*, written by a Dane, set in China, and adapted by Americans. Hence the characters of Oceanna and Odessa, globe-traveling traders in essences whose presence in the Emperor's Court contradicts the original story even as it proves essential to the story's telling. Here the past and future commingle, disparate geographies intersect, and the essence of life reveals itself in the song of a nightingale.

Other Productions in FST's Repertoire

Jester Kings of Java - This comical tale of love gone awry features authentic Indonesian shadow puppets in a one-man extravaganza in which kings, buffoons, a talking horse, demon giants and a flying monkey dance across the screen to the mesmerizing sound of Javanese gamelan music.

Cupid & Psyche - The struggle to grow and change. Like an invisible rope connecting us intimately with the gods and people of ancient Greece, *Cupid & Psyche* celebrates the human spirit in the best kind of tale: a love story with a happy ending.

Artist-in Residence Teaching Programs - FST's teaching programs use the art of the puppet to build confidence, enhance curriculum, and promote self-expression while having fun.

About the Artists

Carol Farrell began performing experimental theater in 1971 with the New World Energy Theatre in Switzerland, then moved to San Francisco to study dance. She earned her MA in Theater Design at University of Connecticut where she got hooked on puppetry. After 4 years on the University of Maine's Theater faculty, Carol co-founded Figures of Speech Theatre in 1982. She has studied Object Theatre at the Institut Internationale de la Marionnette in France, and *bunraku* puppetry in Japan. Carol's responsibilities as Co-Director of FST have included co-creating eighteen works of original theater, performing, designing costumes, and developing teaching residency programs.

John Farrell founded Figures of Speech with Carol Farrell in 1982 after an abbreviated course of law study. Since then he has studied directing for the puppet theatre with Josef Krofta of DRAK Theatre, and carving with Toru Saito, Japanese master puppet builder. John has taught at the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, and is the proud father of daughters Delia and Alida. In 1999 he was one of five American artists awarded a six-month fellowship through the Japan-US Friendship Commission's Creative Artists' Program. The Maine Arts Commission awarded him an Individual Artist Fellowship in 2002. As Co-Artistic Director of Figures of Speech Theatre, John wears many hats from performer to director to puppet and set designer, to producer of World Puppets Portland, an international festival of puppetry arts.

Andrea Goodman has performed and collaborated with Figures of Speech since 1994. Her vocal expression combines her technical voice study with John Devers in New York, her 17 years of performing experimental music/dance theater with Meredith Monk, and her 25-year exploration of sound-healing. Her voice is heard on five albums with Meredith Monk on the ECM label and on recordings of her own compositions: *The Moon's Daughter* and *Divine Doorways*. She is the founder of Ruby-Throated Spirit, Boothbay, Maine, where she offers voice lessons, sound-healing, Cosmic Harmony Class, astrology and tarot readings, sacred ceremonies, blessings and retreats. She is the author of *Lightning Holds My Hand, A Woman's Journal of Guidance*. www.rubythroatedspirit.com