

BELLS & MOTLEY

Olden Music, Dance, & Storytelling

Participatory Family Storytelling/Music Performance

Get a Cue & Sing Along on the Erie Canal!

“15 MILES ON THE ERIE CANAL” A Participatory Fun Folk Operetta

'Fifteen Miles on the Erie Canal' is a lively, colorful, & very participatory historic musical storytelling journey for children of all ages, great for the whole family. Enjoy authentic Tall Tales and Canal Sing-Along, Act-Along Songs presented in 19th century 'folk opera' performance style, complete with great sets & costumes. Hear favorite canal music played as it once was, performed on a collection of historic instruments that includes hammer dulcimer, banjo, fiddle, squeezeboxes, and even a Hurdy-Gurdy!

The story unfolds when Captain Simon Slick and Irish cook Sallie Waters meet up with Sal, a truly amazing Mule (a guest selected from the audience!), to set off on a rollicking journey down The Grand E-ri-e Canal, 8th Wonder of the World! But oh me, oh my -- where did the water go, how can we solve this dilemma? Tall Tales and Riddles come to the Rescue! Great characters, great stories, and everyone sings in this unforgettable historic enrichment experience.

Option: Get a CUE in the Fantastic World of Folk Opera!

To enrich the children's understanding and appreciation of the craft behind a staged opera performance, the artists enjoy presenting a show-and-tell as they are setting up for their show. Take a guided tour through sets, props, instruments; engage with the artists in vocal & physical warm-ups; learn other aspects of stagecraft- discover step-by-step what goes on behind the scenes.

A "15 Miles" Performance can expand to include pre-show workshops, adding even more children's singing roles, canal-era dancing, and in a residency format, even student-written Tall Tale vignettes that may be performed as part of a program finale. Custom-designed programs available. Contact Artists for details.

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"...As a Children's Librarian, I will add that I too enjoyed the performance very much. The creativity, devotion, and artistic talent of these musician/folktellers is far above the caliber I have seen anywhere."
-Mary Jo Cohan, Bayport Public Library, Bluepoint, NY

"...Written evaluations & audience comments after your performance confirmed that all the children, and adults, attending the program thoroughly enjoyed it. In particular, our audience liked the audience participation in the story...the music and the instruments were a big hit also. One comment sums it up: 'Invite them back!'"
-Sally Otis, Director, Hazard Library, Poplar Ridge NY

"...I highly recommend the Bromkas. It was a most educational, enlightening, & empowering experience for our children to time travel with them and be immersed in the life and culture of the Erie Canal ...truly phenomenal artists and educators who bring history to life."
-Helen Laroche, Principal Kensington Rd. School, Glens Falls

Arts Disciplines

Historic /Traditional
Storytelling, Music, Musical
Instruments, Folkways

Audiences & Venues

Schools, Libraries, Festivals,
Concert & Performing Arts
Series, Children's & Family
Storytelling Series

An exceptional audience-
building offering for A Concert
Series. to bring new audiences
and generations to a love and
appreciation for historic music
and instruments.

An ideal public audience
combines all ages for
inter-generational enjoyment

Helpful Information

- A versatile program that may be presented **indoors or out**, on a stage or on the floor.

- Compact & Flexible footprint of sets allows configuration in small spaces when required.

- For library audiences, children seated on the floor up close to the performers creates an intimate, inclusive atmosphere that young children appreciate.

- We prefer natural acoustics and intimate audiences when possible, but sound system is available if required.

- Length:** Our Operetta runs about 45 min. If requesting pre-show activities, add time as appropriate. (Flexible- can also be longer or shorter.)

Related Programs

- An Erie Canal Participatory Dance Party
- "Where Did the Water Go" Tall-Tale skit-writing & performance wkshp/residency
- Learn to Play Pennywhistle

