

Ford's Theatre Student Matinee

PROGRAM



Photo of Jade Jones by Scott Suchman.

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Into the Words

Where do fairy tales come from anyway?

Short answer: The whole world! But the tales that inspired *Into the Woods* are European in origin.

Long answer: All around the world, fairy tales were passed down for centuries by word of mouth. Before there were published books, TV, radio or internet (can you *imagine?*), people told stories! Eventually, when the printing press was invented, fairy tales were published and illustrated so they could be read at home.



Gustave Doré, 1864. Photo from Wikimedia Commons.

Is there such thing as an American fairy tale?

Have you ever heard a sports team victory referred to as “a Cinderella story”? It usually refers to an underdog team that had a seemingly miraculous season.

Walt Disney used America’s fascination with fairy tales to build his film company, rewriting favorite stories like *Cinderella*, *Puss in Boots* and *Snow White*.

Did you know?

IMDB lists 166 movies with “Cinderella” in the title.

Disney’s versions almost always have:

- ✓ A happy ending
- ✓ A rags-to-riches story
- ✓ A female character who is rescued by a wealthy, male character

Ready, Set, Go

The set design of *Into the Woods* plays a big part in telling the story on stage. We interviewed set designer Milagros Ponce de León to learn about her designs.

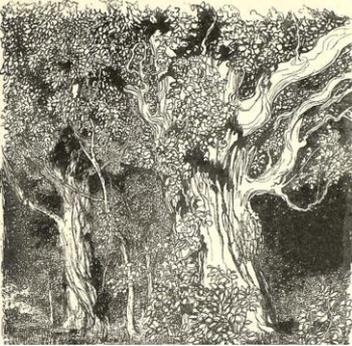
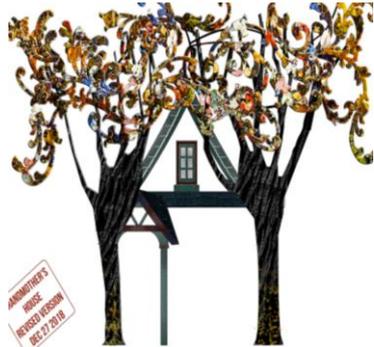


Illustration from *Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm*, Arthur Rackham, 1917.
Photo from Wikimedia Commons.



Set design by Milagros Ponce de León, 2019.

The trees have a very specific design. Can you describe how you created them? As a scenic designer, you look for visual research when you are about to start your work on a play or a musical. For *Into the Woods*, I looked at a lot of fairy-tale illustrations, and the work that spoke to me the most was the work of Arthur Rackham. He was a British book illustrator whose work is full of very expressive lines that depict magical forests that are mysterious and haunted and beautiful. These lines were the point of departure for the woods in this production.

How can students interested in set design get started? I became a set designer by accident! I studied drawing and painting for nine years before I got into scenic design. Growing up and attending college in Perú, I never got exposed to theatre. So only after I moved to the U.S. for graduate school did I come across theatre as a possibility and the idea that scenic design could be a career. With additional training, I was able to transfer my art skills into stage design.

Students interested in scenic design should... Draw, and paint, and take photographs, and see shows, and visit art galleries, and watch movies; anything that develops their eyes for color, texture and composition... and then find a good place for training!

Giant, Lingering, Deep Questions

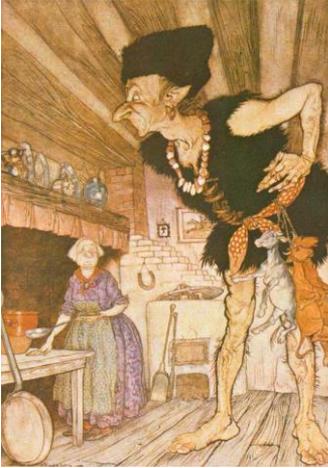


Illustration from *English Fairy Tales*, Arthur Rackham, 1918. Photo from Wikimedia Commons.

Did you know?

The Jack and the Beanstalk fairy tale is believed to have originated more than 5,000 years ago. In some versions, the giant's name is Blunderbore or Gogmagog.

What do you think is the moral lesson of the Jack and the Beanstalk story?

- ✓ It's okay to steal from the rich if you are poor.
- ✓ Do whatever it takes to get ahead in life, even if you have to hurt someone.
- ✓ Don't be greedy.
- ✓ Do be greedy. Fortune favors the bold.
- ✓ Listen to your mother.
- ✓ Or something else...

How do you feel about what happens to the giant? Is it fair?

Share your thoughts with us on Twitter @FordsEdu!

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