



MONDAY  
APRIL 9 2018  
11:30 AM

TUESDAY  
APRIL 10 2018  
9:30 AM & 11:30 AM

CAHOOTS NI  
**SHH!**  
**WE HAVE  
A PLAN**



2017 > 2018  
FIELD TRIP SERIES

BROADEN THE HORIZONS  
OF YOUR CLASSROOM.  
EXPERIENCE THE VIBRANT  
WORLD OF THE ARTS  
AT THE McCALLUM!



LEARNING LINKS

McCALLUM THEATRE EDUCATION  
PRESENTS

CAHOOTS NI  
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"One of the things  
I have been trying with my books  
is to tell stories as much as  
possible through images rather  
than through words."

> CHRIS HAUGHTON  
AUTHOR

## Connecting to Curriculum and Students' Lives!

**SCIENCE** > Birds, habitat and behavior

**ARTS** > Theater, music, mime

### EXPANDING THE CONCEPT OF LITERACY

**What is a "text"?** We invite you to consider the performances on McCallum's Field Trip Series as non-print texts available for study and investigation by your students. Anyone who has shown a filmed version of a play in their classroom, used a website as companion to a textbook, or asked students to do online research already knows that "texts" don't begin and end with textbooks, novels, and reading packets. They extend to videos, websites, games, plays, concerts, dances, radio programs, and a number of other non-print texts that students and teachers engage with on a regular basis.

We know that when we expand our definition of texts to the variety of media that we use in our everyday lives, we broaden the materials and concepts we have at our disposal in the classroom, increase student engagement, and enrich learning experiences.

Please consider how utilizing your McCallum performance as a text might align to standards established for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language.

How do we help students to use these texts as a way of shaping ideas and understanding the world?

Please use this material to help you on this journey.

**NON-PRINT TEXT** > any medium/text that creates meaning through sound or images or both, such as symbols, words, songs, speeches, pictures, and illustrations not in traditional print form including those seen on computers, films, and in the environment.

# THE WORK OF ART

## A NON-PRINT TEXT FOR STUDY

WHAT'S IT MADE OF? HOW CAN THIS WORK SERVE AS A COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS-MANDATED "TEXT" FOR STUDENT STUDY IN THE CLASSROOM?



Four friends are out on a walk. Three of them are big and one of them small. Wait! What's that? They peer up into the trees above them. A bird! A beautiful bird. And as if they were all the same person, they have the same thought at the same instant. They must have this bird, though for what purpose seems less clear. Fingers go up to lips. Shh! They have a plan. Out come the nets. They tiptoe closer and closer. "Ready...one...two...three...GO!" But in the next moment they lie in a tangled heap as their quarry flies away. The plans pile up too, each one foiled by the trio's own ineptitude. It's only when they've exhausted their resources that the fourth of their party, the little one, steps forward. He knows that kindness sometimes goes further than dirty tricks. Will his three pals follow his gentle lead or will they continue their path to failure at any cost?

The actors, highly skilled in physical theatre, bring these characters to life. Gestures, moves, facial expressions, stillness, and timing are the tools at their disposal. As in Cahoots NI productions worldwide, the performers in this work rely less on what can be heard than on what can be seen. Humor and poignancy operate side by side. Cleverness abounds. The audience brings its imagination to the task. Don't suppose, however, that silence reigns. Far from it. A magical score interweaves melody, now cheerful and bouncy, now heartfelt, with sound effects that help us navigate our way through this instructive tale.

The sights are captivating. Snow lightly sprinkles down from above, birds materialize and soar aloft, and butterflies flutter in jars. The scheming trio breaks out in synchronized dance, giddy and rollicking. Atmospheric lighting – heavy on the blues – sets the mood. And what happens next? Shh...





# THE ARTISTS

WHO HAS PRODUCED THIS TEXT FOR STUDY?



PAUL BOSCO McEANEY

Cahoots NI, a professional children's theater company, created in 2001, is based in Belfast, Northern Ireland. In part these artists are dedicated to that form of theater called physical theatre, and in part they are devoted to creating works which feed into an arts-in-education outreach program. This means, on the one hand, that they focus on the visual potential in theater, while introducing a strong thread of magic and illusion into the mix. It means, on the other hand, putting a work of art at the center of a student's educational experience – or what they call “extending the imaginative life of a piece beyond the performance itself.”

These far-sighted founders are Paul Bosco McEaney and Zoe Seaton. Here are some further thoughts concerning their mission:



ZOE SEATON

“To provide inspiring theatrical experiences for children. To encourage appreciation of the arts in children from all sections of society. To develop meaningful links with the communities in which the company works. To expand the imagination and stimulate the artistic creativity of children. To produce high quality large-scale work for children to tour main stages throughout Ireland. To work with experienced and highly regarded professional artists from Northern Ireland and in doing so contribute to the cultural economy of the region.”

Right?



GARTH McCONAGHIE

“Throughout my childhood, my mother and father shared my love for the arts, so in that sense, I'm very lucky,” says founder Paul Bosco McEaney who is based in County Armagh. “They recognized that drumming and performing magic tricks were my biggest passions. They were very supportive and encouraging.”

Composer Garth McConaghie's website offers this: “Garth is passionate and empathetic about creating music and sound for mixed media platforms. He has worked extensively as a composer, sound designer, musical director and music producer for studios, theatre, film and television. Garth's work has been performed and broadcast all over the UK, Ireland and internationally as part of theatrical productions, exhibitions, television and radio.”

The cast consists of Hugh W. Brown, Philippa O'Hara, Claire Cogan, and Lorcan Reed.

Author Chris Haughton, whose imagination hatched this particular tale, is a designer and children's book author.

His first book, *A Bit Lost*, was translated into 20 languages and won awards in seven countries including the Dutch Picture Book of the Year.

As a child, he says, "I grew up in Dublin and was crazy about dinosaurs. My uncle gave me a trowel which I used to carry around so I could look for dinosaur bones. I also liked *The Muppets*, and I went through a phase of making airplanes. Ever since I remember I was good at drawing. I loved factual books with pictures and diagrams I could understand and I hope to do some of my own non-fiction soon."

He continues. As an adult, "I love to travel and I have ended up working in lots of different jobs all over the world. In San Francisco I was a waiter, in London I was a handyman in Paddington train station (that's where they found Paddington bear). In Hong Kong I taught English to very small children and in India I taught at an art school. I am from Ireland originally. In Hong Kong the small children I was teaching didn't understand me very well, so to keep them looking at me I had to make funny faces and draw pictures on the blackboard. I also read them lots of books but only ones with pictures so we could both understand. If the book was in Chinese I just made up the story as I went. While I was there in Hong Kong I started illustrating for newspapers and that is why I called my website [www.vegetablefriedrice.com](http://www.vegetablefriedrice.com). I spent a lot of time in India and Nepal and I got interested in doing work with Fair Trade. When I came back to London I started working with a great company called People Tree. They make clothes and bags and things, so I helped them with some designs ... with their profits they help build schools and hospitals."



"I've always worked in the theater, but I'm lucky enough that my best job is what I'm doing now. I love directing shows and looking for new pieces of work"

> PAUL BOSCO MCENEANEY  
CO-FOUNDER  
CAHOOTS NI

# CONTEXTS

## WHAT INFORMATION SURROUNDS THIS TEXT FOR STUDY & COULD HELP MAKE STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT WITH IT MORE POWERFUL?

The main thing that makes physical theatre stand out from other kinds of theater is the way it relies on purely visual means of storytelling. That said, physical theatre comes in lots of different forms. The unifying thread that runs through each of these is the preference of movement over text. Gesture, body language, use of stage space and levels – these are the building blocks of physical theatre. “Breaking the fourth wall” is also

generally a feature. This means that the actors, rather than pretending they don't know an audience is present, directly interact with them instead. They may in fact urge the public to take an active part in the performance.

Jacques Lecoq of L'École Internationale de Theatre casts a big shadow in the physical theatre world. This influential teacher always told his students as they graduated from his school, “Now your job is to get over me.” From the beginning, he had been wary of hidebound tradition and doing things the way they had always been done. He wanted to revitalize mime. Under his guidance, mime would take its cue from the thoughts and feelings of the performer. In striking out on this path, he ended up founding his own school, the acclaimed Ecole Lecoq. An important voice in the discipline of mime – and physical theatre – Lecoq explored the boundaries of physical discipline, emotional and comedic content, and spontaneity. “Like (famed theater director Jerzy) Grotowski, Lecoq was a master,” wrote Jack Lang, former French Culture Minister.

Physical theatre also draws on the Commedia dell'arte tradition.

By the 1500s, mime was flowering in Italy in Commedia dell'arte, a form of theater in which stock characters – in the style of, say, Laurel and Hardy, or Lucy and Ricky – were the central and beloved figures. These characters, called zanni, had names like Harlequin and Columbine. The story lines were familiar to audiences and comical. Performing troupes who presented the zanni could run into trouble with the ruling classes, since they often poked fun at society and its institutions. The more outlaw the troupe, the greater their popularity with the serving classes. In addition, these troupes traveled far and wide throughout Europe, their largely visual works finding great success with audiences who couldn't understand Italian.

A major force in physical theatre today is master teacher Daniel Stein. Working early in his career with Etienne Decroux, who in turn had studied with LeCoq, Mr. Stein has taught at Juilliard, Sarah Lawrence, and Berkeley Rep. A recent engagement off-off Broadway caused one critic to declare he'd seen “in the space of a mere hour ... a performer change the entire course of an established art form.” This serves to remind us that there is something cutting edge about physical theatre. It's always going new places.



# TO GET READY FOR THE PERFORMANCE, STUDENTS COULD RESEARCH THESE:

- > PHYSICAL THEATRE AND ITS PRINCIPLES
- > THEATRICAL SCRIPTS

HERE'S A 60-MINUTE LESSON IN COLLABORATION & PROBLEM-SOLVING YOU COULD TEACH TO HELP PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THIS WORK:

**LINE OF INQUIRY** – LOI is an essential question that generates a lesson:

How does Cahoots NI in *Shh! We Have a Plan* create a theatrical presentation that uses movement – not speech – to carry the storyline forward?

Start by showing this brief clip from the show: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_Dtew-iSik](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_Dtew-iSik)

## ASK

What do you notice about the actors? Their movements? The sounds? How do the actors communicate with the audience without speaking?

Have students select a story from your current curriculum. In pairs, have them select a single “scene” from the story and create two different versions of this scene on paper. The first version includes dialogue. The second version includes no dialogue. Instead movement, posture, and physical interaction between the actors communicate what is conveyed through speech in the first version. Students write out all of the actions as a script without dialogue.

Students read one or two of these aloud in class. To deepen student noticing, question them on the way in which actions are put into words on the page. Will these actions tell the story of the scene? How do word choices help the actors to do their job clearly? In what ways is the version without dialogue different from the one with?

Student pairs then share their two different scripts with another pair.



# AFTER COMING TO THE THEATER, STUDENTS COULD RESEARCH THESE:

- > BIRDS
- > MIME

## HERE'S A 45/60-MINUTE LESSON YOU COULD TEACH AFTER STUDENTS HAVE EXPERIENCED THE WORK:

### DISCUSSION

Have students take a look back at the performance. What stood out, and why? Describe the performance. What were the different plot parts – and how were they sequenced? What skills were the actors using? How did the actors interact with each other? What were some of the most striking directorial touches? What emotions were conveyed – and how? What ideas came to mind? Which images stayed with you? What surprised you? What do you want to know more about?

Have students individually select a point in the show when the actors strongly conveyed what was up through action alone. Have them draw several images on paper which show the progression of action in that moment. What came first, second, third, and so on? Have them mindfully illustrate each step.

These are arranged gallery-style and viewed by all. Try guiding the noticing around one or two of these by asking questions that elicit description, then analysis, and finally interpretation.

"I think physical theatre  
is much more visceral  
[than other forms of theater]  
and audiences are affected much  
more viscerally than intellectually"

> DANIEL STEIN  
PHYSICAL THEATRE TEACHER

# WHAT'S YOUR READ OF THIS NON-PRINT TEXT?

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS - AND HOW COULD THEY BE ADAPTED AS GUIDING QUESTIONS TO SPARK STUDENT DISCUSSION?

- > What did the actors do to engage our attention?
- > What elements did they use to tell this story?
- > What did you notice about the music?
- > What are the different ways in which physicality is used?
- > What did you notice about the relationships between the characters?
- > How did the actors interact with each other? With the set?
- > How were sound effects/music used?
- > What in this work is specific to the world of birds?
- > How did props/costumes assist in telling these stories?
- > How did the artists express emotion and convey mood?
- > How did the element of illusion and magic figure into the performance?
- > How was humor used? And was it necessary? What lessons about ourselves can we learn watching the characters interacting with each other?
- > What are some themes in this work?
- > If you could title this work something other than *Shh! We Have a Plan*, what would you call it – and why?
- > What personal associations does this work call up for you?

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## INTERNET

PHYSICAL THEATRE

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physical\\_theatre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physical_theatre)

CHRIS HAUGHTON ILLUSTRATES A  
CHARACTER FROM *SHH! WE HAVE A PLAN*  
[www.balletfolkloricodemexico.com.mx/](http://www.balletfolkloricodemexico.com.mx/)

ILLUSTRATOR CHRIS HAUGHTON CREATES  
CHARACTER USING CONSTRUCTION PAPER  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ep22GovHdDg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ep22GovHdDg)



# BOOKS

## *HOW DOES THE SHOW GO ON: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE THEATRE*

By: Thomas Schumacher

Reading level: Ages 3 and up

Publisher: Disney Editions, 2007

ISBN-10: 1423100883

Filled with detailed explanations, captivating illustrations, and entertaining trivia, this clearly written, lively, and uniquely-designed book is a first-of-its-kind introduction to the world of theater, from the box office to backstage, and beyond.

## *HIDING THE ELEPHANT*

By: Jim Steinmeyer

Publisher: Da Capo Press, 2004

ISBN-10: 0786714018

This is Paul Bosco McEaney's favorite book! Steinmeyer, who has designed illusions for Siegfried and Roy and David Copperfield, presents a cultural history of magic's golden age (from the 1890s to the 1930s), some legendary tricks (including the Levitation of Princess Karnak and Harry Houdini's Disappearing Elephant) and the fierce rivalries that dominated the craft.

## *STUNTS, PUZZLES, AND STAGE ILLUSIONS (INSIDE MAGIC)*

By: Nicholas Einhorn

Reading level: Ages 10 and up

Publisher: Rosen Central, 2010

ISBN-10: 1435894545

Stunts, puzzles, and stage illusions all spark the same question in friends, family, and audience members: how can the seemingly impossible actually happen before their eyes?

## *SHH! WE HAVE A PLAN*

By: Chris Houghton

Reading level: Ages 5 and up

Publisher: Walker, 2014

ISBN-10: 1406342327

### LEARNING LINKS HAVE BEEN CREATED BY:

**MARK ALMY**  
RESEARCH AND TEXT UNLESS  
OTHERWISE NOTED

**MARK DUEBNER DESIGN**  
DESIGN

**MICHAEL FLANNIGAN**  
FIELD TRIP SERIES COORDINATOR

**KAJSA THURESSON-FRARY**  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

"More children in  
Northern Ireland have the  
opportunity to see world-class  
children's theatre than if  
[Cahoots NI] hadn't been created."

> **PAUL BOSCO MCENEANEY**  
CO-FOUNDER  
CAHOOTS NI