

A Bend in the Crick of Time in Saugerties

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(Photo by Alan Fetahi)

You might well wonder: What exactly is a “crick,” and how does it get bent in time? The dictionary gives us “a painful cramp or muscle spasm”; also, “a Northern variation of creek.” Or could it refer to the British biologist who proposed the double-helix spiral model of DNA? Arm-of-the-Sea Theater’s annual outdoor performance spectacle aims to illuminate just this reference in the August 23-25 production of the Esopus Creek Puppet Suite’s *A Bend in the Crick of Time*.

As it so happens, the company’s studio and the waterfront park where the production will be staged both sit in what was the heart of the Industrial Revolution in Saugerties. The concentration of manufacturing concerns was powered by water running over the dam, and many of the vestiges of that time period can still be seen in old buildings and other remnants of industry along the Esopus.

“Just past the dam,” explains Arm-of-the-Sea founder Patrick Wadden, “the creek makes a sharp 90-degree turn at the estuary, and another one at the Hudson River. A Bend in the Crick of Time plays on this. It’s a very site-specific production, not one that’s going on tour. It provides a geographic link.”

These “True Tall Tales from Olde Saugerties” might invite any such interpretation as they celebrate events in local history, featuring a cast of real-life, larger-than-life characters from the region. A tapestry of stories rolls out with Saugerties farming families, Civil War draftees and draft-dodgers, papermill workers, a steamboat captain, a wandering poet, two sisters who were lighthouse-keepers and the lively mortals from the Fishermen’s Rest social club taking the stage. Their dramatizations connect contemporary audiences to the past in vivid shapes and colors.

Founded in 1982 by Wadden and Marlena Marallo as “an experimental hybrid performance group combining art, ecology and social action,” Arm-of-the-Sea made good theater of such educational topics as the water cycle, aquatic and terrestrial food chains, creature metamorphosis and nutrient cycles, as well as the biomagnification of toxins, deforestation, soil erosion, loss of genetic diversity and global warming. As a part of Arm-of-the-Sea’s local arts initiative Stories from Here, community members have helped create the show’s masks and puppets.

The Puppet Suite is designed and directed by Wadden and Marallo and features music by the Malcolm Cecil Trio with Charles Griffiths and Robin (the Hammer) Ludwig, along with the voices of Sarah Underhill and Bob Blacker. The ensemble cast includes LeeAnne Richards, Trey Daniels, Cathy Muller, Soyal Smalls, Morgan Thrapp and Rosemarie Ceraso, along with local volunteers who bring to life the dozens of characters and puppet images.

The 2013 Puppet Suite A Bend in the Crick of Time begins at 8 p.m. on August 23, 24 and 25 at Tina Chorvas Waterfront Park on East Bridge Street in the Village of Saugerties. Admission costs \$10 for adults, \$5 for children and \$25 for a family of four. Tickets are available at the park entrance each evening. Arrive early and bring your own lawn seating.