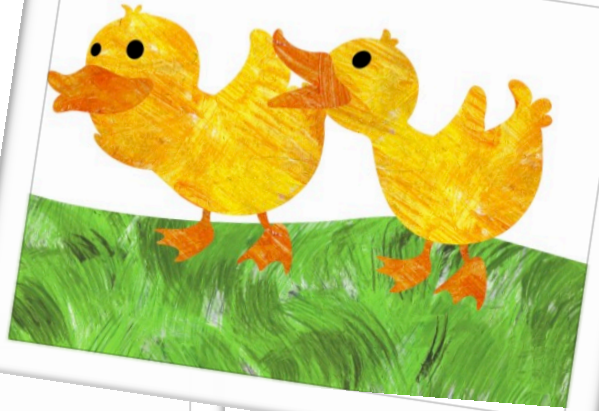


# NEW STAGE THEATRE

Arts in Education Tours 2019-2020

**WHO ARE YOU  
CALLING UGLY?**  
**A MODERN DUCK TALE**





# THE STORY ON THE STAGE

Every year Ms. Pinkersly's students present their class play as a part of "Story Time in The Park." This year the play has been canceled because there was a virus going around and several students missed too many rehearsals. When Ms. Pinkersly discovers that she forgot to send the email canceling the performance, she realizes that the show must go on! She rallies the group of students that are present to be in the play. Max, a fourth grader, is thrilled to join the cast, but his friend Henry is not as enthusiastic. However, the most reluctant student to participate is Willow. Willow is an excellent student and she was planning to study for the spelling bee all day today. Ms. Pinkersley promises to help her study for the upcoming spelling bee if she participates in the play. Now with a new cast in place, the class presents the story of The Ugly Duckling.



The Ugly Duckling is the story of a young duck who has never fit in. The last egg to hatch, the duckling looks nothing like the other ducks on the farm. She is so different, that she is never fully accepted. Her handsome brothers ridicule her, play cruel games and do not want her around. They give her the awful nickname, "The Ugly Duckling."

Frustrated and heartbroken, the young duckling ventures away from the farm, determined to find her place in the world. Along the way she meets a crew of boisterous characters: a frog, a hunter, a dog, an old woman and her pet hen.

However, her troubles are not over. When the little duckling is frustrated and wants to give up, she is shown an act of kindness by a group of children that turns the story around.

In the spring, she sees her reflection in the pond and recognizes herself as the most beautiful swan of all. The "Ugly" Duckling's heartwarming journey, from the awkwardness of childhood and adolescence to grace and maturity, is filled with self-discovery, perseverance, and a laughs along the way.

Hans Christian Andersen's inspiring tale teaches all of us to "dare to be ourselves."



# THE STORYTELLER

## Hans Christian Andersen And The World's Most Ugly Duck



Hans Christian Andersen was born in Odense, Denmark, in 1805, the son of a cobbler and a washerwoman. Despite his background and lack of education, Andersen's father encouraged his son's early interest in literature and drama. At the age of 14, Andersen convinced his mother to allow him to seek his fortune in Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark. A combination of determination and good luck led him to become first a singer and actor, then a dramatist –

although an unsuccessful one – and finally a writer. His first book, aptly entitled *Youthful Attempts* (1822), sold just seventeen copies (with the remaining 283 being sold to a grocer for use as wrapping paper). But after extensive travels throughout Europe gathering material, his novel, *The Improvisatore*, was published in 1835 and was an immediate success. His *Fairy Tales Told for Children*, which appeared in the same year, was not immediately appreciated. But as he wrote more tales, his genius became internationally recognized, and within his lifetime he found himself acknowledged as the pre-eminent master of the fairy tale. Andersen broke new ground by writing in the language of everyday speech and he had a unique ability to read his stories aloud and to act them out. Hans Christian Andersen described his own life as a fairy tale: an uneducated boy from a poor family who was to rub shoulders with aristocrats and kings, and a shy adult who rose above his shortcomings to hold children spellbound with tales that have continued to enthrall generations ever since. Certainly it was the stuff of make-believe. The qualities contained in the universe of Hans Christian Andersen are of inestimable value and during this bicentennial year of his birth, should be celebrated throughout the world. His genius lies in the fact that he has something vital to convey to children and adults alike. His writings contain universal truths about human nature and psychology, crucial to the development of every individual.



# THE STORYTELLER

## Hans Christian Andersen And The World's Most Ugly Duck

A real innovator in his method of telling tales, Hans Christian Andersen used idioms and constructions of spoken language to break with literary tradition. While some of his tales exhibit an optimistic belief in the ultimate triumph of goodness and beauty (e.g., "The Snow Queen"), others are deeply pessimistic and end unhappily. Indeed, one reason for Andersen's great appeal to both children and adults is that he was not afraid of introducing feelings and ideas that were beyond a child's immediate comprehension, yet he remained in touch with the child's perspective. He combined his natural storytelling abilities and great imaginative power with universal elements of folk legend to produce a body of stories that relate to many cultures.



It may also be noted that part of what makes some of the tales so compelling is Andersen's identification with the unfortunate and the outcast. A strong autobiographical element runs through his sadder tales; throughout his life he perceived himself as an outsider and despite the international recognition he received, he never felt completely accepted. Andersen himself told the critic Georg Brandes in an interview that his autobiography had already been written in *The Ugly Duckling*, saying that it was "a reflection of my own life". Hans Christian Anderson has been described as a tall, ugly boy with a big nose and big feet. He grew up poor, receiving only a basic education and was forced to support himself from a very early age.

Finally, both the story *The Ugly Duckling* and the author Hans Christian Andersen went on to happily-ever-after endings. The tale of, *The Ugly Duckling*, enjoyed immediate success, quickly selling out of its first printing, receiving public and critical praises. Hans Christian Anderson also enjoyed fast-rising literary fame from about the mid-1830's onward.



# THE ORIGINAL STORY

## HAN'S CHRISTIAN ANDERSON'S THE UGLY DUCKLING

Once upon a time down on an old farm, lived a duck family. Mother Duck had been sitting on a clutch of new eggs. One nice morning, the eggs hatched and out popped six chirpy ducklings. All except one. This one is the biggest egg of all. Mother duck sits and sits on the big egg. At last it breaks open, "Tchick, tchick!" Out jumps the last baby duck. It looks big and strong. It is grey and ugly.

"I can't understand how this ugly duckling can be one of mine!" she said to herself, shaking her head as she looked at her last born. Well, the gray duckling certainly wasn't pretty, and since he ate far more than his brothers, he was outgrowing them. As the days went by, the poor ugly duckling became more and more unhappy. His brothers didn't want to play with him, he was so clumsy, and all the farmyard folks simply laughed at him. He felt sad and lonely, while Mother Duck did her best to console him.

"Poor little ugly duckling!" she would say. "Why are you so different from the others?" And the ugly duckling felt worse than ever. He secretly wept at night. He felt nobody wanted him.

"Nobody loves me, they all tease me! Why am I different from my brothers?"

Then one day, at sunrise, he ran away from the farmyard. He stopped at a pond and began to question all the other birds. "Do you know of any ducklings with gray feathers like mine?" But everyone shook their heads in scorn.

"We don't know anyone as ugly as you." The ugly duckling did not lose heart, however, and kept on making inquiries. He went to another pond, where a pair of large geese gave him the same answer to his question.

Once again he was all alone. He fled as far away as he could, and at dawn, he found himself in a thick bed of reeds. "If nobody wants me, I'll hide here forever." There was plenty a food, and the duckling began to feel a little happier, though he was lonely. One day at sunrise, he saw a flight of beautiful birds wing overhead. White, with long slender necks, yellow beaks and large wings, they were migrating south.

"If only I could look like them, just for a day!" said the duckling, admiringly. Winter came and the water in the reed bed froze. The poor duckling left home to seek food in the snow. He dropped exhausted to the ground, but a farmer found him and put him in his big jacket pocket."

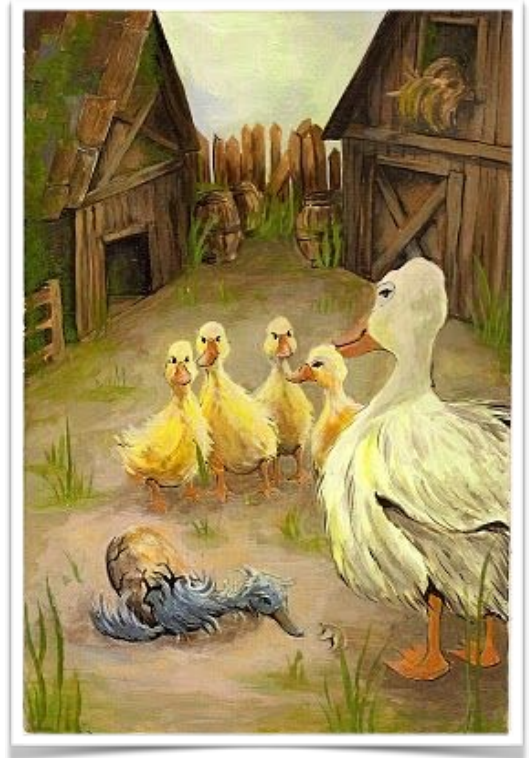
I'll take him home to my children. They'll look after him. Poor thing, he's frozen!" The duckling was showered with kindly care at the farmer's house. In this way, the ugly duckling was able to survive the bitterly cold winter.

However, by springtime, he had grown so big that the farmer decided: "I'll set him free by the pond!" That was when the duckling saw himself mirrored in the water.

"Goodness! How I've changed! I hardly recognize myself!" The flight of swans winged north again and glided on to the pond. When the duckling saw them, he realized he was one of their kind, and soon made friends.

Now, he swam majestically with his fellow swans. One day, he heard children on the riverbank exclaim: "Look at that young swan! He's the finest of them all!"

And he was full of happiness.





# THE UNIQUE SET DESIGN



In our adaptation of *The Ugly Duckling* entitled, *Who Are You Calling Ugly? A Modern Duck Tale*, a teacher and her students are meeting at a local park for a picnic. Every year they gather in this park for their annual class play, however; this year the play was *supposed* to be canceled. When the teacher realizes that she never officially canceled the performance- she must regroup and rally her students to perform the class play with little to no rehearsal.

In order to create the many different locations of the story the students in the play, as well as the audience must use their imagination to recreate the world. Locations include: a farm, a pond, a cabin in the woods and more.

The design was inspired by the challenge of using only scenery and props that you may actually find in a playground or local park. Scenic elements include: a swing set, sand box, a sling shot, soccer ball, park bench and more.

The story moves quickly and all actors play multiple characters. The set allows the everyone to move freely running, crawling on the floor and even taking a swing on a swing set. The scenery will continually surprise the audience, fully engage their desire to play, and to transport them into a modern retelling of Hans Christian Anderson's *The Ugly Duckling*.



# INNOVATIVE COSTUMES

DESIGNED BY LESLEY RAYBON

When children play “make believe” anything is possible. The joy of designing costumes in the world of this adaptation discovering how to bring the farm animals to life! To keep the authenticity of the script, every animal represented has at least one animalistic costume piece: feathers, frog eyes, even a dog tail. The costumes, along with the set and props will keep the audience on their toes.





# INNOVATIVE COSTUMES

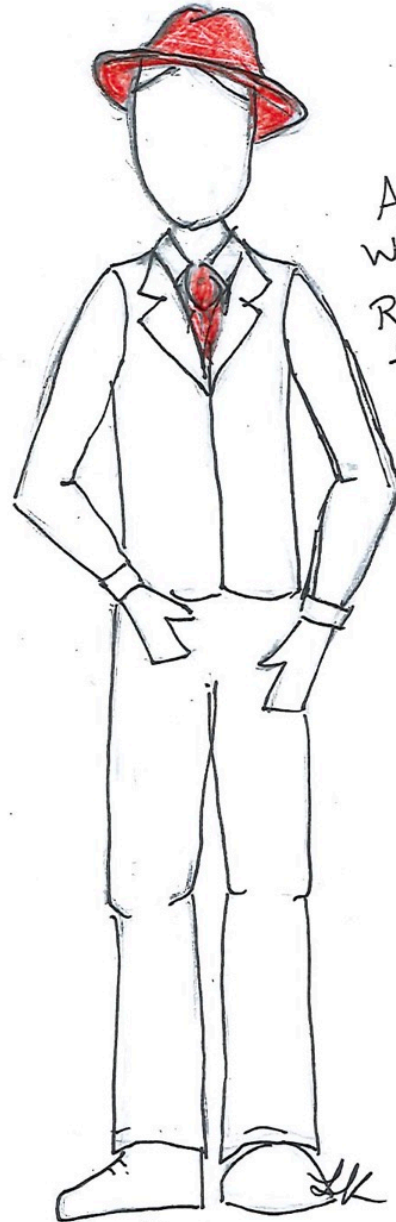
mob cap  
& wig

Blouse,  
skirt,  
apron  
blue  
tones



Old Lady

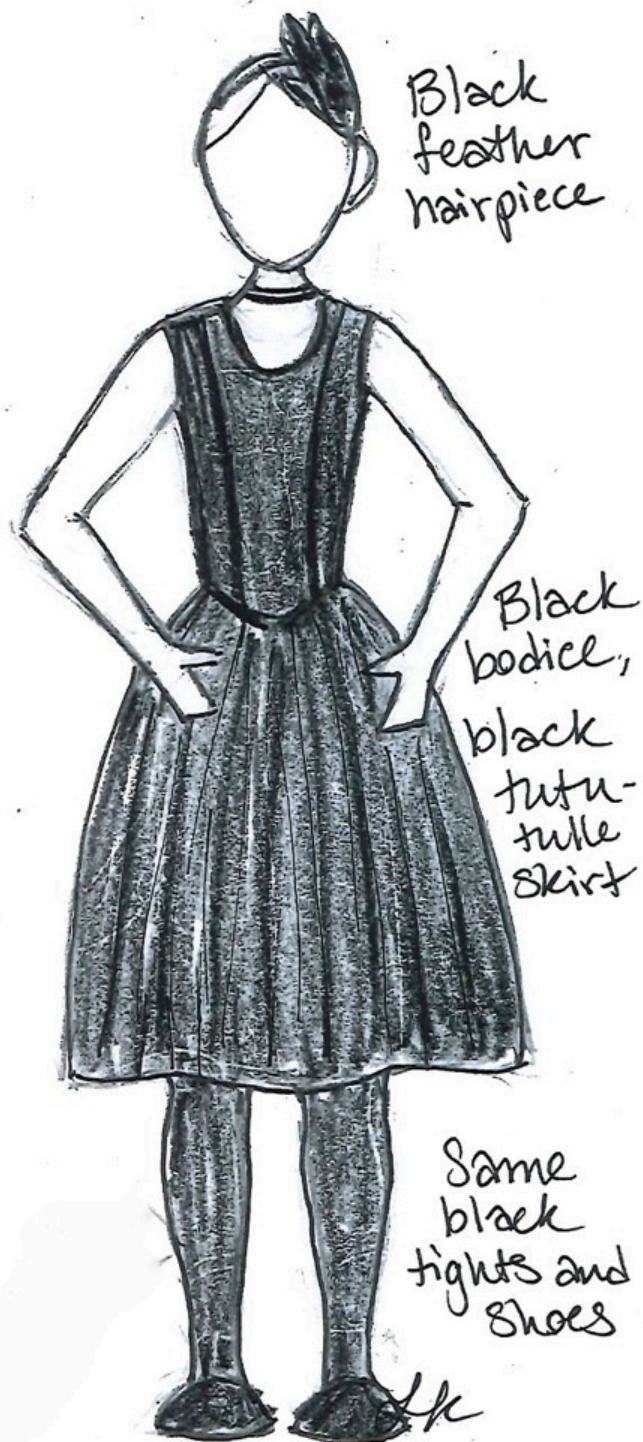
All in  
white,  
Red  
fedora,  
Red  
cravat



Hensley



# INNOVATIVE COSTUMES



Black Swan



# MEET THE DUCKLINGS

## (OUR COMPANY OF ACTORS)



**ELLIE BOISSEAU** is a graduate of University of Memphis with a BFA in theatre with a concentration in musical theatre. She is excited to be a part of this theatre community, and to be an Apprentice at New Stage Theatre. Favorite credits include: ***The Sparrow*** (Emily Book), ***Nine*** (Luisa Contini), ***Othello*** (Desdemona), ***The Servant of Two Masters*** (Clarice), and ***Into the Woods*** (Rapunzel). She gives thanks to her family for their everlasting support, to Blake and his unwavering love, and all her friends who've lifted her up her through thick and thin.

**JAYMI HORN** is a recent graduate of Ohio Northern University where she received a BFA in musical theatre. She is extremely excited about the opportunity to work at New Stage Theatre. Some of her favorite theatrical roles include Jesus in ***Jesus Christ Superstar***, Lucy in ***Elysium***, and #2 in ***The Wolves***. Other theatrical credits include ***Romeo and Juliet***, ***Young Frankenstein***, and ***Lysistrata***. She would like to thank her family for their unwavering support and she would also like to thank the members of MT19 for their never-ending encouragement.



**KYLE DEVIN HUNTER** (Apprentice) is from Tallahassee, Fla. and graduated from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU) with a BFA in theatre arts with a minor in philosophy and religion. Hunter made his Essential Theatre debut in ***Dumb Waiter*** (Gus). He has since been seen in ***Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*** (Gooper), ***Akeelah and The Bee*** (JT), ***Change It Up! Live Out Loud*** (Ensemble), and ***Sing on Ms. Griot*** (Kimathi). Hunter was also cast in ***In the Red and Brown Water*** (Ogun Size) and nominated for the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival competition. He has also been a recurring ensemble member in the 32<sup>nd</sup>, 33<sup>rd</sup>, and 34<sup>th</sup> Edition of The FAMU Connection.

**CHRISTOPHER SFERRA** is excited and thankful to be making his New Stage debut! He recently graduated from SMU with a BFA in theatre. He is currently an acting apprentice at New Stage. At Southern Methodist University, he played such roles as Trouble/Doctor (***In the Blood***) and Adult Male (***Spring Awakening***). Professionally, he has played such roles as Dr. Watson (***The Hound of the Baskervilles*** Jean's Playhouse) and Bruce Ismay (***Titanic: The Musical*** Jean's Playhouse). Sferra would like to thank his mother for her love and support! Lastly, he would like to thank his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!





# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION



## The Ugly Duckling: A More In-Depth Conversation

The story of the Ugly Duckling has been adapted countless times. Relevant themes include: bullying, sibling rivalry, discrimination, prejudice and responsibilities of growing up. In the play everyone picks on the Ugly Duckling because she is different. The Ugly Duckling is discriminated against by members of her family because she does not look like them. She is constantly teased, bullied.

Her situation is much like that of a child being bullied by a classmate on the playground. The bullied child is verbally and/or physically harmed for what are perceived by the bully to be unacceptable differences such as wearing different types of clothing, having a different way of thinking, or simply for looking physically different.

This is a form of wrongful discrimination. While some forms of discrimination may be unintentional, the form that it takes in the story, as is the case with the schoolyard bully, is conscious and intentional. Discrimination is a form of prejudice, which includes feelings of hostility or indifference, as well as a belief that it is okay to negatively target a person or group of people. The story presents a wonderful opportunity to examine and explain the harms of discrimination and make it very clear for every learner.



# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. Prior to the show, read a version of The Ugly Duckling.

2. Why did the other animals call the Ugly Duckling ugly? What did they mean when they called him ugly? Does looking different make someone ugly?

3. Why would someone tease/bully/make fun of people who look different from them?

4. Is there any situation in which it is acceptable to judge someone by their appearance? (Beauty pageant, fashion contest, job interview...) What makes these different from the case of the Ugly Duckling?

5. Do you have to look like the people around you to fit in with them?

6. Why did the Ugly Duckling have to find birds that looked like him to know and be comfortable with who he was?

7. Does the way someone looks on the outside determine who they are?

8. What advice would you offer the ugly duckling? What advice would you offer the other ducks he encounter?





# STUDENT EVALUATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

1. What was the funniest moment in the play? What was the most surprising?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is the moral or lesson of the play? How will you apply the lesson your life?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. The Ugly Duckling gets very sad when the other animals make fun of him for being different. What advice would you give to her?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. How did the Ugly Duckling's feelings about herself change from the beginning of the play to the end of the performance?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What caused her to change the way she saw herself?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What advice would you give to other kids/ducks about how to treat someone if he/she is feeling left out?



6. What other plays would you like your students to see?