

PLAYS FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY-MINNEAPOLIS

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Hare & Tortoise

By
Brendan Murray

Hare & Tortoise was first presented by Tutti Frutti, UK, in 2011

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HARE & TORTOISE: Introduction

Being asked to adapt one of Aesop's fable sounded like a doddle.
I mean the story's right there so what's the problem?

Well, as it turned out, the problem was finding the play – that's to say the play I wanted to write and thought our audience of 4 – 7 year olds would want to see – within the story of Hare & Tortoise.

The commissioning company, tutti frutti productions, had asked me to explore notions of opposites, friendship and time, and although I wanted to be true to the original, I wasn't comfortable with its simple and (to my mind) questionable moral of *slow & steady wins the race*.

Eventually – and with much help from others – I hit on the idea of *letting go* and particularly letting go of (comforting, predictable) certainties in favour of (dangerous, but ultimately more fertile) uncertainties. That is to say, a play about the terror and excitement of growing up.

I've tried to provide a text that's both clear and – given the age of our audience – deliberately repetitive but which leaves plenty of room for musical and physical invention/discovery during pre-production and/or rehearsals.

BM

THANKS...

To the company, creative team, and everyone at tutti frutti – but above all Wendy, without whom...

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Hare and Tortoise was commissioned by tutti frutti productions and produced jointly with York Theatre Royal, opening there on September 22nd 2011

Company

Hare	Barnaby Southgate
Tortoise	Luisa Guerreiro
Stage Manager	Kate Stoney

Creative Team

Director	Wendy Harris
Designer	Catherine Chapman
Composer	Dominic Sales
Movement Director	Ruth Tyson-Jones
Production Manager/ Lighting Designer	Judith Cloke
Sets & Costumes	York Theatre Royal

tutti frutti

Artistic Director	Wendy Harris
General Manager	Emma Killick
Tour Manager	Alison Povey

York Theatre Royal

Chief Executive	Liz Wilson
Artistic Director	Damien Cruden

WINTER

THE WORLD IS WINTER
TORTOISE SLEEPS
HARE WAITS...

HARE The world is winter: shivery, shaking...
Tortoise sleeping: sound and silent...
Hare is waiting: wishing, wondering
When will Tortoise wake?

HE LOOKS BUT SHE'S STILL ASLEEP

1, 2, 3... 1, 2, 3, 4... 1, 2, 3, 4, 5...

TORTOISE STIRS. THEN SETTLES AGAIN

Tortoise small... Hare tall...
Tortoise slow... Hare fast...
Tortoise sleeping... And Hare wants to race!

Ready – Steady – Go!

AND HE WATCHES HIMSELF RUN...

Ready – Steady – Go!

AGAIN HE WATCHES HIMSELF RUN...

Ready – Steady – Go!

HE RUNS, WINS AND CELEBRATES NOISILY

The winner! Yes!

HE REMEMBERS HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE QUIET

HARE [QUIETLY] The winner!

PAUSE

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7...

HE MAKES A NOISE... THEN A LOUDER ONE...
AND LOUDER STILL...

TORTOISE STIRS... BUT SETTLES AGAIN

HARE 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9..... Oh, come on Tortoise: wake up!

TORTOISE STIRS. HARE HOLDS HIS BREATH.
TORTOISE WAKES & PUTS ON HER GLASSES

TORTOISE Hare!

HARE Tortoise!

TORTOISE You waited!

HARE Did I?

TORTOISE Yes.

HARE Race now?

TORTOISE Maybe...

HARE Yes?

TORTOISE Maybe...

HARE Yes!

TORTOISE Maybe in the spring.

HARE Spring? Is that now?

TORTOISE Next.

HARE [SINGS] I can't wait for now to be over.
I can't wait for next to be now.
I've waited the whole of the winter,
Waiting for Tortoise to race...

But when? When..? When....?

TORTOISE HOLDS UP HER HAND AND
BREATHES IN DEEPLY...

FIRST INTERLUDE: WINTER INTO SPRING

THEY SING AND DANCE

BOTH The world was winter: shivery and shaking...
Tortoise sleeping: sound and silent...
Hare was waiting, wishing, wondering
When will Tortoise wake..?

WINTER BECOMES SPRING

The world turns and buds blossom...
Breathing, branching:
Becoming spring!

SPRING

HARE Race now?

TORTOISE Not yet. First things first...

HARE Spring!

TORTOISE Clean!

TORTOISE WASHES HER FACE. HARE DOES IT FASTER

HARE Finished!

TORTOISE COMBS HER HAIR. HARE DOES IT FASTER

HARE Finished!

TORTOISE BRUSHES HER TEETH. HARE DOES IT FASTER

HARE Finished! The winner!

HARE CELEBRATES NOISILY

HARE Yes! Race now?

TORTOISE Not yet. Tell me about the winter.

HARE What?

TORTOISE I hear the stars shine like diamonds...

HARE Stars..?

TORTOISE And your breath freezes on the frosty air...

HARE Does it?

TORTOISE And the snow falls like so many moments of time...

HARE ...No.

TORTOISE You didn't notice?

HARE SHAKES HIS HEAD

TORTOISE So what were you doing?

HARE Waiting?

TORTOISE Yes and while you were -

HARE Race now?

TORTOISE [BEAT] Isn't it too early?

HARE No!

TORTOISE Well, if you can wait one minute...

HARE One minute? Easy! [HE TRIES] Yes?

TORTOISE [CHECKING HER WATCH] No.

HARE Oh...

TORTISE PRODUCES A PACKET OF SEEDS

TORTOISE Never mind... Carrots!

HARE Carrots!

TORTOISE [GIVING HIM THE SEEDS] Carrots!

HARE [LOOKING AT THE SEEDS] Carrots?

TORTOISE In spring we plant he seeds...

SLOWLY SHE MAKES FOUR HOLES IN THE EARTH

TORTOISE 1, 2, 3, 4... Now your -

HARE QUICKLY PLANTS THE SEEDS

HARE 1, 2, 3, 4!

TORTOISE - turn...

TORTOISE PUTS AWAY THE GARDENING THINGS

HARE Are they ready yet?

TORTOISE Not yet. We have to wait for them to grow.

HARE Oh... Race now?

TORTOISE Maybe...

HARE Yes?

TORTOISE Maybe...

HARE Yes!

TORTOISE Maybe in the summer.

HARE Summer? Is that now?

TORTOISE Next.

HARE [SINGS] I can't wait for now to be over.
I can't wait for next to be now.
I've waited the whole of the springtime,
Waiting for Tortoise to race...

But when? When..? When....?

TORTOISE Look!

FLOWERS APPEAR AND BECOME BUTTERFLIES.
THEY LAND ON THE TREE AND BECOME LEAVES

SECOND INTERLUDE: SPRING INTO SUMMER

THEY SING AND DANCE

BOTH

The world was springtime: breathing, branching...
Tortoise waking: slowly stretching...
Hare was waiting, wishing, wondering
When will Tortoise race..?

SPRING TURNS INTO SUMMER

The world turns and sun sizzles...
Swoons and swelters:
Becoming summer!