



## *in the Wind*

*Seattle Storytellers' Guild Fall 1991, Vol IV, Number 3*

### **Notes On An Asian Adventure**

*by Cathy Spagnoli*

Konichiwa. Venacum. Hello in Japanese and Tamil, the two languages I've been stumbling through this past year in Japan and India. I even felt brave enough to try simple telling in them, but I relied on gestures and the good nature of my listeners to pull me through. Now, our family is settled back again in Seattle and I feel most blessed by a year so full of stories and storytelling friendships.

I spent two fall months telling stories in Japan: in community centers, children's centers, schools, public libraries, theater halls, and in that uniquely Japanese invention: the home library. Bunkos, or home libraries, developed years back because there were few public libraries in Japan. A space in a home or community center was set aside as a warm place for neighborhood children to borrow books, learn crafts, and to hear stories.

Then on to a warm Indian winter for four months of storytelling in several Indian states. A series of teacher workshops in Bombay started off my time there, reminding me of the challenges in India: few materials, noisy urban environments, large numbers in most settings. One teacher came up to me in tears, asking how she could even be heard in her classroom with 90 children! Class

sizes range from 25 in a most exclusive private school to an average of 50-60 in many places. Returning then to Cholamandal, the artist's colony south of Madras which is our second home/community, reassured me of the beauty in India: rich art forms, incredible hospitality, a deep feeling for friendship and family, resourcefulness. A week in Mysore College of Education allowed me to lead a workshop and to tape stories for their educational radio station. In Madras, INTACH, a national environmental - cultural group, sponsored a series of open air school assemblies (the trickiest being the one under a banyan tree with some 1000 children, a broken microphone, and several birds that dropped their applause on the front rows of the audience!)

After various other programs, I finished in Delhi with a workshop sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, this three day storytelling camp brought me together with middle school teachers and a traditional teller, all from North India.

Next, back to Japan for three incredible months during which thanks to a Japan Fellowship I was able to meet storytellers all over Japan, my good friend, Yukiko, had done a tremendous job of contacting numerous storytelling groups

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in Japan, lining up a very intense schedule which took me through all four major islands.

There is so much to share from this time: Meetings with traditional folk tellers in small villages and eager library tellers in big cities, visits to one of the last tellers of the medieval epic, Tale of the Heike, and to one of the few Ainu tellers, times with a kamishibai (Japanese storytelling cards) player/producer and in a hot springs retreat of Northern Japanese tellers. The list of memorable people and experiences is too long. Come hear more about the tales and tellers of today's Japan at the Burke Museum this October. And I'll organize my notes and write in more detail later about some of the tellers I met. For now, hello again, it's good to be back.

### **The Story in the Story** *by Martha Eshelman-Smith*

"Oh, that's just sour grapes." A casual remark can evoke a story - the fable of the fox trying unsuccessfully to reach the grapes (see Babrius, a first century "Aesop"). A simple choice of words can embed a story within a story. Or one may embed a story by explicit reference. In "*The Monks of Kosamba*" the Buddha says: "Monks, this quarrel is very wrong. Nothing is gained from it. We are told in the Latukika Jataka how, simply as the result of a quarrel, even frail Katakirili birds were able to overcome elephants by power of stratagems." (see *Jewels of the Doctrine*, trans. Obeyesekere). The Buddha assumes that the story, a jataka, is well known to his audience and a simple summary will invoke the tale. The *Panchatantra* (trans. Ryder) also uses story to illustrate points. The stories are told in full to educate young princes who are "hostile to education" and "lacking discernment". The stories are framed by the tale of a teacher educating the princes on specific topics such as the loss of friends, the gaining of friends. The listener interprets the story within the topical frame. [As a aside, these fifth century Kashmiri tales became so popular that they were a major source for La Fountain in seventeenth century France.]

Other well-known stories within a story include *Tales of A Parrot* (trans. Simsar) where tales are told to keep a wife from clandestine meetings and *Arabian Nights* in which Shahrazad tells stories to preserve her life. In these, the frame story (the story within which other stories are told) is merely a vehicle holding disparate stories together.

We see that the inside story can be as brief as a phrase or as long as a fully developed story. The outside (frame) story may be the primary tale or a mere skeleton on which to hang tales. But embedded tales also have rhetorical purposes that support the main tale such as contrast, comic relief, recapitulation, foreshadowing. In the *Mahabharata* (trans. van Buitenen) the tale of Nala and Damayanti in which Nala gambles away his kingdom retells the main story of Yudhisthira who gambles away his kingdom and foreshadows the return to his throne. The story of Nal (Nala) is an independent oral epic told in Northwestern India (see summary in *Oral Epics In India* edited by Blackburn, Claus, et. al.). Alone the story has many episodes involving Nal's son Dhola; embedded, Dhola is not mentioned.

In epics, tales are often not embedded but rather strung together - a number of independent songs or episodes composed into an epic. This process is most thoroughly documented in the creation of the Finnish epic, the *Kalevala*, out of the folk runes collected by Lonnrot (see Pentikainen's *Kalevala Mythology*). A similar pattern of uniting individual tales occurs in Blair's *Tall Tale America* or in "cycles" such as the Swampy Cree narrative poems *The Wishing Bone Cycle* (trans. Norman). Full epics tend to be literary creations; folk performances include only the episodes relevant to the occasion, known to the teller, or of interest to the particular audience.

An awareness of how stories fit together can be used by the teller to adjust stories to fit a particular time frame. More importantly, a storyteller can plan programs with an awareness of the potential power of inter-story material and of how the proximity of one story to another effects its impact.



## Sources: About Stories and the Folks Who Tell Them

by Margaret Read MacDonald,  
King County Library System.

Only one title to review this quarter, but it is a winner. *The First Love Stories: From Isis and Osiris To Tristan and Iseult* by Diane Wolkstein. Harper/Collins, 1991.

Diane Wolkstein has created a wondrous volume here. These ancient tales are retold with a clarity and purity of form which makes them live. Diane's oral performance sensibilities blend gracefully with her literary skills to create beautiful texts. Only the most skilled will attempt to tell these, but all tellers will want to spend an evening in the midst of such tales. And what a gift for lovers, if you know any! Lovers included: Isis and Osiris; Inanna and Dumuzi; Shiva and Sati; The Song of Songs; Psyche and Eros; Layla and Majnun; Tristan and Iseult. Glossary and notes on sources included.

## Picnic Report

The first SSG picnic was held Aug. 4th at Lincoln Park. About 25 storytellers and friends attended and took the opportunity to develop friendships, share ideas, and participate in the 3 hour story-swap. Special participants included Makia Malo, his wife, Ann, Jeff Gere from Hawaii and Bruce Marcus, a teller from the Boston area.

Everyone agreed the picnic was a great success and a "must" for next year.

## Calendar of Events

*\*Editor's Note: The calendar of events covers a three month period. Please send information for January, February and March to \*In the Wind by December 10.*

### October

- 5** Dropping, Rolling, Tail-pepper and Other Animal Tales presented by Martha J. Eshelman-Smith. Bellevue Branch of U.W. Bookstore. Sat., 11am. Free.
- 5** Fall Fantasy Storyteller series, "Puppets Aplenty" to delight the young at heart by Jeanine Bartelt. Sat., 11am. Presented by Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island. 232-6920 Free
- 6** Other Animal Tales presented by Martha J. Eshelman-Smith. U.W. Seattle Branch Bookstore. Sat., 1pm. Free.
- 8-19** Helen Porter: "My Father Taught Me To Swim, II". Annex Theatre, 8pm, \$12. Toronto, Canada (416) 651-6362
- 9** Ron Evans, the Chippewa-Cree storyteller and keeper of the talking sticks, will be telling the stories of his people. 7pm, Elliott Bay Bookstore. Sponsored by the Seattle Storytellers' Guild. \$5 general public, \$4 SSG members. Recommended for adults and children ten and older. 621-8646
- 11** Friday Nite Expressions presents, "Tales To Chill the Bones and Warm the Heart", by Merna Hecht. Doors open, 7:30pm, open mike until 8:00. University Congregational Church, 4515 - 16th Ave. NE, U district. \$3. For more information, call Rod Winget at 439-7588.
- 12** Fall Fantasy Storyteller series, "Original Stories, Songs and Poetry" by Nick Adams. Sat., 11am. Presented by Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island. 232-6920 Free

## *Calendar of Events, Continued. . .*

**12** Family Festival of Tales: Funny and Fearsome" by Gene Friese who will open a new series of storytelling programs at the Elliott Bay Book store Cafe, co-hosted by the Guild. 11am - noon. \$2 for individuals, \$5 for families. Food and beverages may be purchased in the cafe. 1st South & South Main.

**15-31** Ghost Stories by Helen Carmichael Porter. 98 Pinewood Ave., Toronto, Ontario, M6C 2V2, Canada, (416) 651-6362

**18** Cathy Spagnoli will tell tales from her latest trip to India. 7pm. Open mike to follow. Burke Museum, UW campus. \$5 general public, \$3 members. Recommended for adults and children ten and older. 621-8646

**19** Fall Fantasy Storyteller series: Gene Friese - The "Bard" and His Bears. Sat., 11am. Presented by Island Books, Sat., 11am. 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island. 232-6920 Free

**19** "Tall Tales and Short Songs" by Lorne Brown and Ted Potochniak. Heliconian Hall, Toronto, Canada, 8pm

**20** Lorne Brown, Ted Potochniak. Solar Stage, 2pm. North York, Canada. 924-8625

**21-Nov.1** Spooky Tales for Halloween. Private sessions for small groups with storyteller Margaret Read MacDonald. Bothell Public Library. 496-7811 to book a visit.

**23** Seattle Storytellers' Guild board meeting. 7pm. For more information, call Joy Anderson, 827-6430.

**26** Maori myths and folk tales by Elizabeth Miller, "The Dreamweaver". These and other tales by a New Zealand storyteller. 3pm. Bothell Library. 486-7811 Free

**26** Fall Fantasy Storyteller series, Halloween

Halloween Tales That Haunt, Hoot and How!!" by Cherie Trebon. Sat., 11am. Presented by Island 3014 -78th Ave., S.E., Mercer Island, 231-6920 Free

**27** Scandinavian and Maritime stories at the Nordic Heritage Museum. Pat Peterson, Martha Smith, Naomi Baltuck, and Ken Jackson. 2-4pm in Ballard. 3014 NW 67th 789-5707 Free

**31** Story 'n Snack returns to Cherie's home. Bring your scariest story and spookiest snack. 7:30 - 10:00pm. 525-0382 for information or directions.

## **November**

**2** Naomi Baltuck will be telling stories at the Everett Public Library. 1 - 11:45am and 1 - 1:45pm For school age children. Free

**2** Fall Fantasy Storyteller series: Kathi Lightstone Matanovic, award winning entertainer. Sat., 11am. Presented by Island Books 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island. 232-6920 Free

**5-10** Dan Yashinsky, "The Storyteller at Fault", with composer/musician Oliver Schroer. 8pm. Tarragon's Extra Space. 30 Bridgeman Ave. Toronto, Canada. 654-1542

**8** Friday Nite Expressions presents, "Thanksgiving Day Notes: Stories of a North American Holiday" by Ron Vernon. Doors open, 7:30pm, open mike until 8:00. University Congregational Church, 4515 - 16th Ave. NE, U district. \$3. For more information, call Rod Winget at 439-7588.

**9** Fall Fantasy Storyteller series, Native American tales by the master of dialect, Tom Galt. Presented by Island Books. Sat., 11am. 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island. 232-6920 Free

**9** "Adventures In Storyland" by Spencer Shaw, a family story hour at Elliott Bay Book Store Cafe. 11am. \$2 individuals, \$5 families.

13 Helen Porter, "Cinderella Around the World". United Way Concert. Call J. Stickney, 396-2000, Canada.

15 Scott Marckz, Peg Loughrin, and Dale Blinhdheim, a talented musical trio, will present an evening of stories in song at the Burke Museum. 7pm. \$5 general public, \$3 SSG members

16 Fall Fantasy Storyteller series, master of humor and suspense, Deborah Harris-Branham. Sat., 11am. Presented by Island Books, 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island. 232-6920 Free

16 Rod Carruthers, Carol McGirr, "Crows and Cranes". Heliconian Hall, 8pm, \$11. Toronto, Canada. 924-8625

19 Naomi Baltuck will present, "Leapin' Lizards and Foolish Frogs", folktales about reptiles and amphibians, at the Bothell Library. 7pm 621-8646 Free

19 Ken Roberts, "No Football Coaches Allowed." East Collegiate, 10:30am. Oshawa, Canada 723-8195

20 Seattle Storytellers' Guild board meeting. 7pm. For more information, call Cherie Trebon, 525-0382.

22 Tellebration! In a grand celebration of storytelling, Seattle will be one of over one hundred communities presenting a program of stories simultaneously throughout the United States. This year we not only have Cathy Spagnoli, Debra Harris-Branham, Vi Hilbert, Joy Anderson, and Pat Peterson of Seattle, but we have Jay Stailey from Texas, Barbara Lipke from New England, Craig Rooney from Michigan, and other tellers from all four corners of the U.S.A. 8pm. \$5 admission. 6556 35th NE Co-sponsored by the National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling. Proceeds will benefit the National Storytelling Archives and the Seattle Storytellers' Guild. 621-8646

23 Fall Fantasy Storyteller series, Thanksgiving tales by Pat Peterson. Sat., 11am. Sat. 3014 78th Ave. S.E., Mercer Island.

26 Thanksgiving - no Nov. Story 'n Snack. See Dec. 12th

## December

12 Joint Nov/Dec. Story 'n Snack. Last story swap of 1991. 7:30 - 10pm. Call Cherie at 525-0382 for information or directions.

13 Friday Nite Expressions presents, "Story of the Other Wise Man", by Kathleen Wiess and Debbie Dimitre, will do a theatrical reading of this dramatic story with choral accompaniment as a special Christmas program in the sanctuary. Doors open, 7:30pm, open mike until 8:00. Featured speakers at 8pm. University Congregational Church, 4515 - 16th Ave. NE, U district. \$3. For more information, call Rod Winget at 439-7588

14 "Christmas Around the World" by Pat Peterson who will share this sparkling holiday season program. A family story hour at Elliott Bay Book Store Cafe. 11am. \$2 individuals, \$5 families. 1st South & South Main.

18 Seattle Storytellers' Guild board meeting. 7pm. For more information, call Sally Porter-Smith, 284-2315.

20 The Seattle Storytellers' Guild presents HOLIDAY MAGIC, a potpourri of holiday stories. UW campus, Burke Museum. 7pm \$5 general public, \$3 SSG members. 621-8646

## January 1992

11 "Leaping Lizards and Foolish Frogs" by Naomi Baltuck, who will be telling world folktales featuring reptiles and amphibians. A family story hour at Elliott Bay Book Store Cafe. 11am. \$2 individuals, \$5 families. 1st South & South Main.

## Festivals, Workshops, Conferences, Contests & Classes

### October

**1-Dec. 3** Storytelling: Art and Technique. A 3-credit course from the University of Washington and taught at the Shoreline School District Center. Tuesdays, 4:30-7:15 pm. This class taught by Gene Friese meets the requirement for the Learning Resources Endorsement area #3. Register for LIBR 471 TCEDP:914-20503. \$219 plus a \$7 materials fee. Call Gene Friese, 284-9469 for information.

**4, 5 & 6** NAAPS 19th Annual National Storytelling Festival, Jonesborough, Tennessee, with Anndrena Belcher, Gordon Bok, Joseph Bruchac, Diane Feriatta, Ray Hicks, Eddie Leniham, Syd Lieberman, Doc McConnell, David Novak, Jay O'Callahan, Sally Rogers, Laura Simms, Barbara McBride Smith, Ricky Smith, Jackie Torrence, & others. For information: NAPPs, Box 309, Jonesborough, TN 37659 (615) 753-2171

**5** Talking Island Festival will be held in Honolulu, Hawaii. Contact Jeff Gere, 67-313 Kiatoko Place, Waiialua, HA 96791 (808) 522-7029

**5** Children's Literature and Storytelling Conference, Trenton, New Jersey. Gwendolyn Jones or Dr. Eileen Burke, Forcina Hall, FH 321, Trenton State College, Hillwood Lakes CN 4700, Trenton, N.J. 08650-4700, (609) 771-2465

**8-29** Whether spinning a traditional yarn or telling from your own personal experience, there is joy in the sharing of a story. We all tell stories every day. In this course, you will expand your storytelling skills in a safe and friendly atmosphere (and share a few ghostly tales for Halloween). Instructor is a professional storyteller. Tuesdays, 7-9:30 pm, UW campus. \$40 Register through ASUW Experimental College 543-4375

**10-13** Annual Meeting of the Oral History Association, Snowbird, Utah. Jay M. Haymond, Utah State Historical Society, 300 Rio Grande, Salt Lake City, Utah 84101-1182, (801) 533-5755

**11-14** "Storytelling Coaching" workshop with Doug Lipman. Friday evening through Monday afternoon. Near Boston, \$265. Limit 8. Send \$75 deposit to Doug Lipman, P.O. Box 441195, W. Somerville, MA 02144 (617) 391-3672

**11-20** Storyfiesta will once more happen in Albuquerque. Ellien Carrol, 4703 Club House Lane Northwest, Suite H5, Albuquerque, NM 47114 (505) 897-0713

**12** Storytelling 91, Dearborn, Michigan, with Marcia Lane, Rafe Marin, Johnny Moses. For information: Detroit Story League, c/o B. Schutz, 2825 Kimberly, Ann Arbor, MI 48204 (313) 761-5118

**18 & 19** Missouri River Storytelling Festival. A brand new event aboard historic Goldenrod Showboat in St. Charles, MO will feature Jackson Gillma, Annette Harrison, Janet Keifer, Ruthilde Kronberg, Michael Parent, Lynn Rubright, Perrin Stifel, Blake Travis & 20 regional tellers. \$85. Sue Hinkel, 616 Meldelsohn, Kirkwood, MO 63122 (314) 965-8904

**19** "Storytelling and play" workshop by Ron Vernon at Unity Church, 8th and John, Seattle. \$30 pre-register. 282-8851

**19** Brunswick County Veterans' Bullshooting Contest, Shallotte, North Carolina, South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 1380, Shallotte, NC 28459 (919) 754-6644

**19 & 20** Three Apples Storytelling Festival. Harvard, Massachusetts. Dave and Anne Butterfield, P.O. Box 191, Harvard, MA 01451 (617) 864-3062

**25, 26 & 27** "Life Stories" workshop with Jay O'Callahan. It will explore the personal aspects of stories. The spiritual dimensions of a life story will also be considered. Small group exercises and discussion will help participants develop and process their material. Friday evening through Sunday at Northern Pines Conference Center on Crescent Lake in Maine. \$225 includes registration, lodging and meals. Box 1054 Marshfield, MA 02050 (617) 837-0962

### **November**

**9** Ottawa Storytelling Festival, with Marylyn Periner & Ottawa tellers; workshops, storytelling, swapping grounds, evening concert. For information: N. Divito, 97 Brighton Ave., Ottawa, ON K1S 0T3 (613) 230-6842

### **December**

**7 & 8** "Spiritual Storytelling" workshop with David Spangler: Creating Pathways to the Sacred. Our sixth sense is our imagination, for it is through the images we form in our minds and hearts that we come to know our world. With this sense, we can also see what does not yet exist; in this way, through the power of the imagination, humanity has created its world. This seminar explores the use of story and imagination as a bridge between the world of form and the world of spirit and energy, pathways from the personal to the sacred. It will focus on the skill of invocational imagination through spiritual stories and myths and their own spiritual story and experience its power to deepen our connection with the sacred. We shall seek to craft our power in our lives. Sat., Dec. 7, 10am - 5pm and Sun., Dec. 8, 11am - 5pm, Chinook Learning Center, Box 57, Clinton, WA 98236 (206) 321-1884

### **March**

**20, 21 & 22** "Storytelling" workshop with Jay O'Callahan & Doug Lipman. Near Los Angeles. \$315 if you pay in full by 2/16. Limit 30. Friday

evening through Sunday afternoon. Send \$100 deposit to Wanna Zinsmaster, 125 N. Allen Ave. #305, Pasadena, CA 91106 (213) 343-4369

## **Puppet News**

### **October**

**18, 19, 20, & 25, 26, 27** Northwest Puppet Center spotlights the Oregon Shadow Theater, presenting "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and "Pecos Bill". Featuring live music on the hammer dulcimer, the tall tales of Pecos Bill and his gal tickle most funny bones. These shadow puppets are designed with translucent colors. \$4 child, \$6 adult, subscription rate available. 6532 Phinney Ave. N., Seattle 782-3955

### **November**

**22, 23, 24, & 29, 30, Dec. 1** Carter Family Marionettes unveils a premiere production of a Chinese Classic "Monkey King". The magical and heroic monkey, possessor of celestial powers, sometimes called "Great Sage Equal of Heaven" nevertheless manages to act like... well... a monkey. The Epic of Monkey is over 500 years old but still captivates young and old with the splendor of the Chinese Opera and humorous monkey business. The hand carved wooden rod puppets have been specially created in traditional Chinese techniques with the assistance of the 5th generation Master Puppeteer, Yang Feng, recently arrived in the U.S. \$4 child, \$6 adult, subscription rate available. NW Puppet Center, 6532 Phinney Ave. N., Seattle 782-3955

### **January 1992**

**31, Feb. 1, 2 & 7, 8, 9** Paul Mesner Puppets presents "Wiley and the Hairy Man". Paul is a solo puppeteer from Kansas City that has been delighting audiences nationwide with this African-American folktale of great zest, humor, and beauty.

*In the Wind* is the newsletter of the Seattle Storytellers' Guild, a non-profit organization, and is published quarterly. Membership in the Guild includes a year's subscription. Please check the expiration date on your label. Deadline for the Winter 1991 newsletter is December 10 and covers events from January through March 1992.

**Board Members:**

Naomi Baltuck, President, 776-1175; Margaret Read MacDonald, VP, 827-6430;  
Joy Anderson, Volunteer Coordinator, 284-0400;  
Gene Friese, Secretary, 284-9469;  
Debra Harris-Branham, 772-0415; Debbie Dimitre; Martha Smith, Grants & Mailing Lists, 522-8788;  
Cherie Trebon, Treasurer, 525-0382; Rod Winget, Publicity, 439-7588;  
Jerry Deneke, 283-7461 and Sally Porter-Smith, editors, 284-2315.

**Call Us For Answers  
621-8646**

**Membership Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Membership:

Individual, \$10.

New  Family, \$15.

Renewal  Donor, \$25.

Institutional, \$20.

Liar, \$49.95

Fairy Godparent (lifetime), \$100.

Muse, be creative & generous, \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in volunteering. Please call me to discuss how I may help.

Please include my name on mailing lists for related events.

**Next Issue: Storytellers' Northwest - An Update. Find out how to be listed in the fourth edition of our storytellers' directory.**

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**Tellebration - A Celebration of Storytelling on  
November 22 at 8pm**

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