

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS @ penn state

OnStage



© Linda Blase 2008. All rights reserved

2008-2009

*Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*  
Dallas Children's Theater

Underwritten by McQuaide Blasko Attorneys at Law

**Penn State's Center for the Performing Arts  
Dallas Children's Theater On Tour**

present

*Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*

**AN AFRICAN TALE**

BASED ON THE BOOK BY **JOHN STEPTOE**  
ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY **KAREN ABBOTT**  
MUSIC AND LYRICS BY **S-ANKH RASA**

DIRECTED BY  
**ROBYN FLATT**

MUSICAL DIRECTION AND ACCOMPANIMENT BY  
**S-ANKH RASA**

CHOREOGRAPHED BY  
**MICHELLE NICOLE GIBSON**

SCENIC DESIGN BY  
**RANDEL WRIGHT**

LIGHTING DESIGN BY  
**LINDA BLASE**

ADDITIONAL SOUND DESIGN BY  
**MARCO SALINAS**

TOUR TECHNICAL DIRECTOR  
**PHIL ZYCHOWSKI**

COSTUME DESIGN BY  
**BARBARA COX**

PROPERTIES DESIGN BY  
**TISH MUSSEY**

STAGE AND COMPANY MANAGER  
**PHILIP JOHN GARNO**

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER  
**JOHN MOSS**

PRODUCER / TOUR DIRECTOR  
**SALLY FIORELLO**

DCT PRODUCTION MANAGER AND ASSOCIATE LIGHTING DESIGNER—**MELISSA CASHION**  
DCT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR—**MAC LOWER**

MUSIC RECORDED AT **AUDIO DALLAS STUDIOS**, GARLAND, TEXAS  
SOUND ENGINEERING BY **RAY BOLLIN**

**THE CAST**

Storyteller/Messenger ..... **RICK L. SPIVEY**  
Mufaro ..... **IVAN JONES**  
Manyara ..... **CHARLI ARMSTRONG**  
Nyasha ..... **CHARLET DUPAR**  
Villager 1/Hungry Boy/Laughing Tree/King ..... **KENNE SPARKS**  
Villager 2/Old Woman/Laughing Tree/Puppeteer ..... **ASHLEY DUPECHAIN**  
Ensemble ..... **JOHN MOSS**

This program is based on the book *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters—An African Tale*, Copyright © 1987 by JOHN STEPTOE.  
The dramatization is being performed by permission of the JOHN STEPTOE LITERARY TRUST © 1996.

**THE TAKING OF PHOTOGRAPHS AND/OR THE USE OF RECORDING DEVICES DURING THE PERFORMANCE IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.**

2 p.m. Sunday, October 26, 2008  
Eisenhower Auditorium

Sponsor: **McQuaide Blasko Attorneys at Law**

*The 2008–2009 season of the Center for the Performing Arts is supported, in part, by grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.*

# Who's Who



© Linda Blase 2008, All Rights Reserved

## **CHARLI ARMSTRONG** *Manyara*

*Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* marks Armstrong's first national tour. She previously appeared in Dallas Children's Theater's 2008 mainstage production of *Mufaro*. Other professional acting credits include *Aladdin* (Theatre Britain) and *Tom, Dick, and Harry* (Pocket Sandwich Theatre).

## **CHARLET DUPAR** *Nyahsha*

Dupar appeared as Emily in Dallas Children's Theater's 2007 mainstage production of *Pinkerton!* and as The Mouse in last season's tour of *If You Give a Pig a Party*. Other acting credits include roles in *Children of Eden* (Theatre Three); *Aida* (Uptown Players); *Cabin in the Sky* (Lyric Stage); and *The Colored Museum* and *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* (Jubilee Theatre). She has also appeared in the Barney video *Let's Make Music* and voiced car-

toon characters with Funimation Productions. She earned an associate's degree in acting at KD Studio's Acting Conservatory.

## **ASHLEY DUPLCHAIN** *Villager 2/Old Woman/Laughing Tree/Puppeteer*

*Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* is Duplechain's second national tour. She previously appeared as The Girl in last season's *If You Give a Pig a Party*. She also appeared as That Grace in Dallas Children's Theater's 2006 mainstage production of *Junie B. Jones and a Little Monkey Business*. Other professional acting credits include *Hair* (Uptown Players), *Cabin in the Sky* (Lyric Stage), *Caroline or Change* (Theater Three), and *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Jubilee Theatre).

## **IVAN JONES** *Mufaro*

Jones is making his Dallas Children's Theater debut in *Mufaro's*

## Who's Who

*Beautiful Daughters*. He has worked in the Dallas area in such roles as Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Frankenfurter in *The Rocky Horror Show*, and Muskustrap in *Cats*. Jones holds associate's degrees in theatre and musical theatre from KD Studio in Dallas.

### JOHN MOSS

*Assistant stage manager/ensemble*

Moss joins the national tour having spent the summer as master electrician at the Wagon Wheel Theatre in Warsaw, Indiana. He appeared as Reverend Sykes in Wagon Wheel's production of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. He has worked as a technician for numerous productions, including Dallas Children's Theater's *Good Night Moon*; *James and the Giant Peach*; and *Night of the Living Dead*; and Theatre Britain's *Aladdin*; *Cinderella*; and *No Sex Please, We're British*.

### KENNE SPARKS

*Villager 1/Hungry Boy/Laughing Tree/King*

Sparks made his Dallas Children's Theater debut in the 2008 main-stage production of *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* and is pleased to be reprising his roles for the national tour. A former teacher, he now focuses on his acting career, appearing in numerous Dallas productions, including Pocket Sandwich Theatre's *Zombie Dearest*, *T-Bone N Weasel*, and *Shades of Grey*. He is also a visual artist and lead singer of the rock band Godfathers.

### RICK L. SPIVEY

*Storyteller/Messenger*

Audiences will remember Spivey's performance as both Papa and Joshua in the 2006–2007 national tour of *A Midnight Cry*. He returned to Dallas Children's Theater as the riotous Dog in last season's *If You Give a Pig a Party*. Other professional acting credits include featured roles in Casa Manana's *South Pacific*, *Cinderella*, and *A Few Good Men*. Spivey has also appeared in The Butterfly Connection's *Rainbow Country* and in numerous productions with Jubilee Theatre.

### ROBYN FLATT

*Executive artistic director/director*

Flatt co-founded Dallas Children's Theater in 1984 with an operating budget of \$500. Under her artistic leadership, the theater's creative and operational stature has grown over the past twenty-four years to reflect its current annual budget of more than \$3 million. Her theatrical career has brought her acclaim as a professional director, actor, and lighting designer. She served as assistant artistic director of the Dallas Theater Center resident company, as well as director of MIMEACT and Theater-in-the-Parks. She holds a master's degree from Baylor University and studied with Etienne Decroux, Juana Laban, and Hanya Holm. Among Flatt's many acting credits are two roles she created for award-winning, world-

## Who's Who

premiere productions—Dewey Dell in *Journey to Jefferson* and Martha Ann Sickenger in Preston Jones' *The Oldest Living Graduate*. Her directing credits at Dallas Children's Theater include *Coyote Tales*, *African Tales of Earth and Sky*, *The Great Gilly Hopkins*, the world premiere musical adaptation by Linda Daugherty and Danny Ray of Steven Kellogg's *The Three Sil-lies*, and more. She has served on the boards of American Alliance for Theatre and Education and Theatre for Young Audiences/USA, and is a recipient of The 500 Inc.'s prestigious Ken Bryant Visionary Award, Dallas Historical Society's 1999 Excellence in Community Service for Creative Arts, the 2002 Leon Rabin Standing Ovation Award, and the Excellence in Non-profit Management Award. Flatt is an inductee into the College of Fellows of American Theatre and holds the honorary designation of American Theatre Fellow for life.

### PHILIP JOHN GARNO

*Stage manager/company manager*

Garno, from Saginaw, Michigan, is pleased to be returning to Dallas Children's Theater where he appeared as Mr. Bullard in the 2006–2007 national tour of *A Midnight Cry* and later served as stage manager for last season's tour of *If You Give a Pig a Party*. He completed a year-long graduate internship with Dallas Children's Theater. Recent theatre credits include *The Bald Soprano*, *Fiddler on the Roof*,

and *Tartuffe*. He holds a bachelor's degree in theatre and music from Saginaw Valley State University.

### MICHELLE NICOLE GIBSON

*Choreographer*

Gibson—choreographer, instructor, and performing artist—received her bachelor of fine arts degree in dance from Tulane University. A New Orleans native, Gibson has also studied at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center, the American Dance Festival, Jacob's Pillow, and the Urban Bush Women's *Walking with Pearl Primus* summer intensive. She was a featured dancer in the Academy Award-nominated film *Interview with a Vampire*, the Academy Award-winning film *Ray*, and the film *Just My Luck* with Lindsay Lohan. Gibson's live performances include *Confederacy of Dances*; *The Kid From Elysian Fields*; tours in Germany, Japan, and The Netherlands; E-Women Network; LINKS Incorporated; Drum Café; and the United Negro College Fund's Patterson Research Institute annual conference. She is the founder and artistic director of Exhibit Dance Collective. Her choreographic credits include *Funk Nation*, *Bourbon Suite Women*, *Origins of Life*, *The River May Cry*, *Orumulia's Voices*, *Passions of Juno*, *A Creole Mass*, and the award-nominated pieces *Women's Evolution* and *Orisha Suite*. Gibson is an artist-in-residence with the Ashé Cultural

## Who's Who

Arts Center, choreographer for Six Flags WOW Entertainment in Dallas, member of Drum Café, and an instructor with the Dallas Independent School District.

### **S-ANKH RASA**

*Composer/lyricist/musical director/accompanist*

At 12, Rasa was the youngest student accepted to the University of California-Berkeley music department. He composed his first symphony at 15 while attending the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. At 16, he performed at the Monterey Jazz Festival as a featured saxophonist with Dizzy Gillespie and the Modern Jazz Quartet. In Los Angeles, he worked as a studio musician (saxophone, flute, and clarinet), composer, arranger, and musical director with Marvin Gaye, Natalie Cole, Stevie Wonder, The Temptations reunion tour, Barry White, and many others. He retired from the studio music scene at 26 and began studying traditional African music, leading to a United States tour with world-renowned African drummer Mamady Keita. Rasa is a performer and historian of the kora (African harp) and composes and sings in three languages. He

is the founder of Kumassi African Ensemble and the composer/conductor of Juju Nation African Arkestra. He worked as multi-percussionist with acclaimed actress, playwright, and director Regina Taylor on the Dallas production of *Crowns*. He also performed in the United States tour of *Crowns* as co-music director and multi-percussionist under the direction of Andrea Frye.

### **PHIL ZYCHOWSKI**

*Technical director*

Zychowski returns for his fourth season with Dallas Children's Theater, where he served as technical director for national tours of *A Midnight Cry*, *If You Give a Pig a Party*, and both the United States and Shanghai, tours of *The Stinky Cheese Man*. He completed his third season as technical director for the Galveston summer musicals. A theatrical veteran, Zychowski has stage managed and performed as an actor and musician in numerous productions, including *Twelfth Night*, *Our Town*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *The Velveteen Rabbit*. A craftsman at heart, he spends his spare time building acoustic guitars and dulcimers.