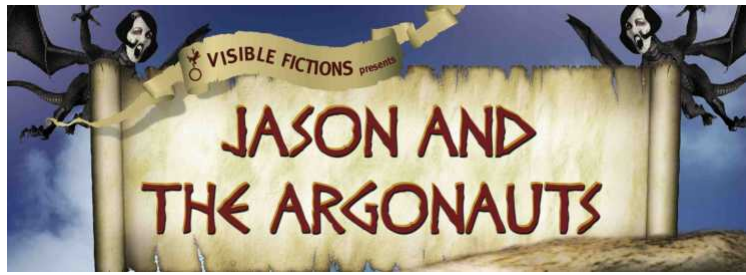


From the producers of
The Red Balloon

"Fast, funny & decidedly funky"
The Herald



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Jason and the Argonauts is produced by Visible Fictions. Visible Fictions is represented by Holden & Arts Associates, Inc. (2008/09 season onwards)

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"Visible Fictions comes with such a blazing reputation that it's hard to ignore"
The Guardian

www.visiblefictions.co.uk

"Visible Fictions...the toast of Broadway"
The Herald

Award winning Visible Fictions – producer of The Red Balloon and Bill's New Frock – presents a brand new version of a classic tale.

Jason & the Argonauts

Two actors, 65 minutes, one golden fleece... Visible Fictions tours a hugely physical and irreverent telling of the ancient Greek myth. Playing with scale, invention, action figures and a stunning transformative cart, this piece is a great adventure story for nine years old and over with monsters, romance, destiny, heroism and revenge.

"playful & inventive...hilarious" The Stage

"will leave you wanting more" The List

"totally brilliant" The Herald

Jason's uncle isn't exactly lovable...he's murdered his brother (the king) and stolen the kingdom and now nobody dares stand up to him. Things are about to get a major shake up though because Jason is BACK! After being banished as a baby, our wannabe hero returns to claim his rightful throne and make some big changes.

However, in ancient times nothing's that straightforward. Jason and his crew must sail on The Argo to the other side of the world to find the Golden Fleece and bring it back in order to unite the people again. As if that wasn't difficult enough, the odd monster, sleeping dragon and clashing rock endeavour to ruin his trip and spice things up on this most fantastic of journeys!

Director	Douglas Irvine
Writer	Robert Forrest
Designer	Robin Peoples
Music	Daniel Padden

Jason & the Argonauts will be showcased at IPAY in Tampa in January 2008. The show has already enjoyed two successful tours and hit performances at this year's Children's International Theatre Festival in Scotland.

For age 9 and beyond...

Visible Fictions is one of the UK's leading theatre companies. Working with the finest artistic talent, we create professional performances that are innovative, memorable and relevant to our audience. The company also produces a vibrant education and participation programme which, like our professional work, inspires our young participants to unleash their artistic potential.

Our dedication to placing both audience and participants at the heart of all we do has allowed Visible Fictions to build an international reputation for creating engaging and high quality artistic experiences for young people and adults alike.

We are regularly invited to perform at the Scottish Children's International Theatre Festival and other festivals across the world. We have collaborated with BBC Panorama and co-produced with BBC Scotland for BBC Radio 4.

Abroad we have co-produced with Danish ASSITEJ and we were thrilled to be the first Scottish theatre company to be invited to perform on Broadway with our production of Red Balloon. We have collaborated with The Seattle Children's Theatre and The Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles and are delighted to be currently working with Minneapolis Children's Theatre Company.

This USA tour of Jason & the Argonauts follows previous international hits, The Red Balloon, Bill's New Frock and Shopping for Shoes.

The Red Balloon adapted by the Company from the novel by Albert Lamorrise
Toured school, theatres and international festivals in Scotland, England, Ireland, USA and Canada (1997-2003). Recipient of the Victor Award 1999

Highlights: The New Victory Theatre, 42nd Street, New York; The Pittsburgh International Children's Festival; The Philadelphia International Children's Festival; The Calgary International Children's Festival; The Children's International Theatre Festival, Scotland; The Brighton Festival; The Toronto International Children's Festival; Four month residency at The Seattle Children's Theatre.

"The Red Balloon the little charmer ... a fine fantasy"
"...this production is pure magic. Lyrical, luminous, enchanting"
The New York Times and Seattle's Child on The Red Balloon

Bill's New Frock adapted by the Company from Anne Fine's novel
Toured school, theatres and international festivals in Scotland, Ireland, USA and Canada (1991-1994)

Highlights: The Galway Festival; The Pittsburgh International Children's Festival; The Philadelphia International Children's Festival; The Calgary International Children's Festival and The Children's International Theatre Festival, Scotland.

Visible Fictions in association with PLAY/The Mark Taper Forum, Los Angeles
Toured theatres, schools and festivals across California, USA and Scotland (2002)

"A stand-out family theatre experience."
The Los Angeles Times on Bill's New Frock

Shopping for Shoes by Tim Crouch
Toured schools, theatres and international festivals (2005 – 2008, continuing to tour)
Highlights: Children's International Theatre Festival, Scotland; Baboro International Arts Festival for Children, Galway; The Calgary International Children's Festival.

"Hilarious and impressive"
Sunday Herald on Shopping for Shoes

RECENT BIOGRAPHY

Shopping for Shoes by Tim Crouch

Hilarious & Impressive Sunday Herald. *Beautifully told* The Scotsman

The Rise & Fall of Little Voice by Jim Cartwright

A Visible Fictions and Scottish Touring Theatres Consortium co-production

...vibrant theatre...wonderful performances The Scotsman

Prince Unleashed by Robert Forrest

A Visible Fictions and BBC Scotland co-production for theatre and BBC Radio 4

A highly engaging drama of modern dilemmas. The Metro

Big Baby by Brendan Murray

Douglas Irvine's production rises magnificently to the challenge of this ambitious script The Times

Into the Dark by Donald Mcleary

...a gripping production ... reflects sensitively on adolescent issues The Sunday Herald

The Invisible Kids, BBC Panorama

Drama director and casting by Douglas Irvine and Visible Fictions. A docu-drama about the real-life stories of young people living with adult drug users.

The programme was absolutely compelling Viewer's response

Monster Scripted by Douglas Irvine, based on the award-winning novel by Walter Dean Myers

It needs a touch of class to make this kind of 'play for young adults' work. And the superb use of video is just that. Visible Fictions has created a dynamic and thought-provoking play - one which speaks to all, young or old Edinburgh Evening News

The Pearl adapted by the Company from the novel by John Steinbeck

...brilliant visual invention...edge of seat enthrallment...fine use of ensemble play... The Mail on Sunday

Bill's New Frock adapted by the Company from Anne Fine's novel

Produced by Visible Fictions and subsequently re-produced by Visible Fictions in association with PLAY/The Mark Taper Forum, Los Angeles

Hilarious throughout...imaginative, assured direction Los Angeles Times

The Song from The Sea by Mike Kenny

...a mesmerising new show for children...the story is magical and absorbing... an unmissable production The Scotsman

The Red Balloon adapted by the Company from the novel by Albert Lamorisse

Magical, enchanting and poignant The Anchorage Daily News on

Two Weeks with the Queen by Mary Morris, adapted from the novel by Morris Gleitzman

...wonderfully observed...brilliantly acted...adults will find themselves choking back tears, the intended audience (of 10 years old and over) just soak up the lessons The Herald

Henry and the Seahorse by Soren Skjold

...yet another delightful show... The List

PRESS REVIEWS AND QUOTES for JASON & THE ARGONAUTS

Edinburgh Evening News, 4 stars

Making the myths and legends of Ancient Greece accessible to a new generation is always tricky. To do so in our televisual age of special effects calls for all the skill and guile which Jason himself possessed. Thankfully, Visible Fictions have just what it takes.

Having only two actors to depict all the heroes and villains of the story is no problem for John and Andy. They quickly establish that this is going to rely on the audience's imagination, just like any playground pretend sword fight. Indeed, a couple of big sticks and a basic crown are enough for them to set up the opening fight to the death. What's more, they succeed in doing so with such skill that they can swap characters mid-fight and still ensure that the story is told clearly and effectively. It's all great fun to watch and the big wooden cart is a suitable vehicle for them to sit on and fight around. A few flips of hidden flaps and it turns in the Argo, ready to carry Jason and his heroes off to the end of the world.

By the time a superbly realised dragon appears, and an exceptionally well staged realisation of the Golden Fleece itself, even the most cynical youngster is cheering the valiant Jason to the rafters.

THE HERALD 4 stars.

Two men and a big wooden cart on a bare stage. How can the Visible Fictions team hope to recreate the thrills, spills and monsters that make the quest for the Golden Fleece such a fabulous vehicle for cinematic special effects?

Perhaps it's the spectacular film by Ray Harryhausen - who didn't have today's technology at his disposal - that's being honoured here as much as the timeless appeal of a rattling good tale. Because the cart, designed by Robin Peoples, is a wonderful box of low-tech tricks on wheels. When bits fold out, transforming it into a giant replica of the paper boat that's been serving as the Argo, the effect is definitely magical...and that dragon's tail...oh my!

THE LIST 4 Stars

There's something about myth that short circuits history and defines an immediacy almost regardless of the historical moment you're in. These are stories told and retold through the ages that capture defining human dilemmas about love, war, family and a host of other preoccupations of our existence which recur in most cultures.

This version of a story of a journey fraught with adventure from Visible Fictions sets itself in the world of the ancients and before, but, partially because of a couple of tremendously engaging performances, finds a contemporary feel that might well have the ship that sails the perilous oceans of a misty past making its way up Lothian Road. In it we see echos of so much subsequent drama that it's hard to number the moments that evoke other great plays that allude to myth. From Hamlet to Oedipus Rex and on to Macbeth the tale flows on.

Telling the story of Jason, whose name, it is emphasised, means 'Healer', and his band of misfits - all played by a succession of action men figures - and their journey beyond the edge of the world to recover the golden fleece, there is no let up in the narrative tension.

This is a pleasing night of entertainment that will leave you wanting more.

HI -ARTS

What child wouldn't like to get their hands on Robin Peoples' set for 'Jason and the Argonauts'? At first sight it's just a wooden cart with two large wheels either side – somewhere for actors Simon Donaldson and Tim Settle to sit as they bide time waiting for the action to begin. But as Robert Forrest's highly enjoyable play swings into life, so the set comes into its own.

Naturally, it functions as a vehicle for young Jason to set out on his epic journey in search of the golden fleece. But with a flick of a couple of catches – and a few clever shifts in scale and perspective in Douglas Irvine's witty production for Visible Fictions – it transforms into a giant paper boat, a perfect size for a crew of Action Man Argonauts.

So it trundles on, deftly concealing the various props as it goes, until the whole thing is upended and transformed once more – this time into a chamber where the valiant Jason is imprisoned and a receptacle for the prize fleece.

The mutations are in keeping with a show, pitched at the over-nines, that is never less than playful, funny and inventive, yet that always keeps sight of the dramatic seriousness of the story.

The result is a fast-paced hour in which our hero does a deal with the murderous king, sets sail to the end of the world, struggles against impossible odds, wins the heart of Medea and returns to face the duplicitous king once more. 'Jason and the Argonauts' rediscovers the vitality of an ancient Greek myth and performs it in a way that is as silly as it is serious.

THE STAGE

'...playful & inventive...'

'...hilarious...'

'...Robin Peoples's design is superb...'

THE SCOTSMAN

'...boasts some terrific assets, including a fabulously inventive set-design by Robin Peoples and two hugely energetic and attractive actors in Simon Donaldson and Tim Settle...'

'...plenty to enjoy here...'

THE TIMES

'...the dragon guarding the fleece was cleverly done...'

'...the music is clever - a pastiche of big adventure movie themes...'

'...Donaldson & Settle are engaging performers...'

TES SCOTLAND

'...a weighty piece of wooden furniture, designed by Robin Peoples, starts life as an ox cart and - to great applause - turns first into the Argos and finally into the Land at the End of the World...'

'...the actors blitz their way through the story with a winning commitment and up-front appeal...'

EDUCATION RESOURCES & STUDY GUIDE

Curriculum Links: Personal & Social Development, English and Drama

Age: Suitable for ages 9 +

In this production Jason makes both a physical journey to another land and a personal journey of self belief and self esteem. Together Jason and his team of Argonauts negotiate and overcome different problems.

This makes Jason and the Argonauts an excellent and inspiring starting point for exploring many areas of the PSD curriculum, in particular themes of transition, self awareness, independence and interdependence. These Education Resources are designed to explore these themes through practical, experiential learning exercise

Preparatory and follow up resources are provided. The resources are drama based but could be used as the basis for group discussion or writing exercises. The exercises build on each other and work as a complete unit but we also encourage you to use the ideas as a starting point and adapt them to best suit the needs of your group.

An example of the resources is given below. Full copies of the resources can be downloaded at www.visiblefictions.co.uk We hope you find them useful and inspiring.

Example: Be brave or afraid?

Ask the group to recall what is said to Jason near the end of the play, just before he is going to fight Phineas:

'If you're not afraid of anything, you can't really be brave – you're just stupid. And if you're not brave you can't be a hero. So to be a hero you have to be afraid.'

Divide the group up into groups of 4 or 5.

Ask them to choose a moment from the story when Jason needed to be brave but he was feeling afraid.

Explain that they are to create two 'tableaux' (still pictures) of that moment, one where Jason is feeling afraid and one when he is feeling brave.

The groups will need to think about who else is in the picture and how they are feeling when Jason is feeling afraid and when he is feeling brave.

Explain that when they show the tableaux, that you are going to come round and tap each character on the shoulder and they are to say what they are thinking at that moment. This is called 'thought track'.

Give them time to prepare and then ask each group to show the 'afraid tableaux', 'thought track' it and then discuss:

- Why is Jason afraid?
- How is Jason's fear effecting the others in the tableaux?
- What could help Jason be brave?

Next, show the 'brave tableaux', 'thought track' it and then discuss:

- Why does Jason need to be brave?
- What is helping Jason be brave?
- How is Jason's bravery affecting the others in the tableaux?

SUMMARY USA TECHNICAL RIDER

A detailed technical rider and lighting plan is available on request

This document provides information to venues regarding our setup, technical and scheduling requirements for this production. As this is a generic document, information is provisional and subject to change.

Production Outline

Touring team	1 Stage Manager/Technician and 2 Actors
Set	A large timber cart, consisting of drawers, cupboards and fold-out sections to create a number of different scenic elements, and a trunk containing props and other items. These items are used in various configurations within a black box performance area
Running Time	65 minutes with no interval

Playing Space

Dimensions	Minimum 9m (30') wide x 6m (20') deep
Minimum Clear Height	4m (14') to lowest point overhead playing area
Masking	Full black box to be supplied by venue
Seating	End on with raked seating preferred
Max Rake Angle	The show can only play on a flat floor

Schedule and Staffing Required from Venue

Schedule	We require a lighting prerig prior to the Load In Load In, focus and plotting requires 4 hours Load Out requires up to 2 hours
Load In Staffing	2 Technicians required from venue
Show Staffing	1 Technician required from venue who may be required to operate lighting. NB that our stage manager is at the sound and light control position for the show, with only the actors onstage.
Load Out Staffing	2 Technicians required from venue

Access

Load In Access	Level or ramped, minimum of bends or turns and reasonable distance from vehicle to stage. A goods lift is required where stage is not at loading level : see minimum door sizes below
Minimum Door	1.2m (4 feet) wide, 1.8m (6 feet) high to allow cart section in on wheels. Lower doorways require min. width of 1.6m (5½ feet) (wider preferred).
Longest Piece	3.31m (11 feet) (by 1.3m (4½ feet) at widest point)
Largest Piece	2.13m (7 feet) long x 0.86m (3 feet) wide x 1.56m (5' 2") high (in normal transport orientation)
Heaviest Piece	Weight to be confirmed but requires a 3-person lift

Lighting

Dimmers	Venue dimmers are used, a minimum of 24 are required with 3 floor circuits
Hard Power	Two outlets required onstage for Hazer and Fan
Control	Lighting desk to be provided by the venue. Lighting has previously been operated by our Stage Manager but venue staff may be asked to operate lighting

Sound

PA	Use of venue facilities required
Speakers	House Left and House Right driven in stereo
Playback	2 CD or 2 MD to be supplied by venue
Control	Sound desk to be provided by the venue. The sound control needs to be positioned next to the LX control to allow both systems to be operated by one person. A control position with open windows or otherwise non-soundproof is preferred. Failing this adequate show relay must be provided to allow clear monitoring of playback levels
Microphones	Venues with capacity of 400+ are required to provide wireless microphones for the actors and a qualified operator.