

SANDGLASS THEATER PRESENTS
BABYLON:
JOURNEYS OF REFUGEES



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Babylon: journeys of refugees

**AN ACTION-PACKED, HIGH ENERGY FILM ADAPTATION OF THE
LIVE PERFORMANCE.**



A response to the world wide refugee crisis and its impact on communities in the United States. Working with the USCRI Vermont (US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants), we seek to understand the challenges that face refugees and asylum seekers. Sandglass conducted research and interviews with new residents who immigrated to the US in order to gain insight into their plight and the challenges of resettlement. Babylon looks at the relationship of refugees to their homelands, lost and new, and the conflicts that exist within the countries to which they flee.

Using puppets and moving panoramic scrolls, five actor/singer/puppeteers tell refugees' stories in original four-part choral songs. Residencies can include a selection of workshops and community engagement opportunities. For ages 14 and up.

Thank you to the many refugees from Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, and Somalia who told us their stories.



THE REFUGEE JOURNEY WORKSHOP

Community workshops presented through the Babylon residency project engage participants through facilitated discussions that stem from a “board game” created by USCRI Vermont’s Laurie Stavrand. The game, called Refugee Journey, recreates the emotional experience of trying to bring refugee “pieces” to safety. Throughout the game, participants draw cards that tell parts of true refugee stories, and move the game pieces forward or backward on the board. Sandglass performers play the roles of border guards, smugglers, medical officers, and immigration interviewers. These characters directly confront participants in order to personalize the refugee experience in all its danger, unfairness, and bureaucracy. Frequently, the game puts a player in the situation of having to make an impossible choice, and these experiences are processed during post-game discussions. The game is over when time is up, or when one person reaches resettlement. The game’s conclusion represents the statistic that only 1% of refugees ever reach a new homeland.



The game of Refugee Journey was created by Laurie Stavrand in collaboration with Jana Zeller (design) and Sandglass Theater

Workshop duration: 105 minutes.
Number of participants: approx. 20 (but can be up to 30)
Age range: High school and older

WHO IS A REFUGEE?

A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries. Find out more: <http://www.unrefugees.org/what-is-a-refugee/>



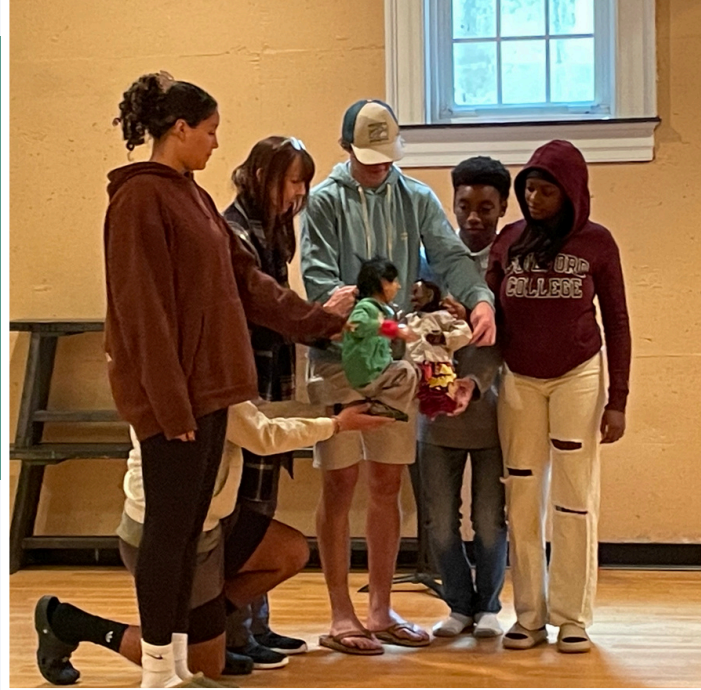
OTHER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES WE OFFER

Puppetry Workshop

Puppets embody stories, rather than tell them. Their language is gesture. Working with puppets can open new and unexpected paths to us as storytellers and can even elicit stories from us -- stories that we did not know we had. When we “manipulate” puppets, we are always listeners. In this hands-on workshop participants will explore three person puppetry technique and have an up-close experience of working with the Babylon puppets.

Other events can include:

- Story Circle Workshop
- Crankie Workshop
- Song Workshop
- Post Show Dialogue and Panels
- Classroom Visits
- and other community engagement events.



Building Partnerships



We encourage our presenting partners to engage local resettlement programs, refugee advocacy groups, and community consortiums to join in planning Babylon residencies. Our hope is that the residency serves as an opportunity to build and strengthen partnerships within the communities we visit that will sustain after we leave. and to bring recognition to the groups on the ground who can be resources for people wanting to get involved.

Groups to consider inviting to panel discussions are regional USCRI chapters, immigration lawyers, people who work with asylees, interfaith groups, racial justice organizations, educational facilities who work in classrooms with newly resettled students, etc.

Development of Babylon: Journeys of Refugees was made possible with funding by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Theater Project, with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and additional support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Fresh Sound Foundation, The Jim Henson Foundation, The McKenzie Family Charitable Trust, The Vermont Community Foundation, The National Performance Network with commissions from The Flynn Center, Portland Ovations, and Columbia College Chicago Center for Community Arts Partnerships.

The film was created with funding from the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Theater Project, with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and additional support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, and The Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art's Building Bridges Program.



JIM HENSON FOUNDATION



Marketing



Video Link - <https://vimeo.com/618957955>

Image Link- <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmLkqm3c>

Requisite credit: Photographs by Willow O'Feral
Sandglasstheater.org/babylon

"Again and again I am also awed by the sensitivity and nuance Sandglass brings to difficult subjects. This expertise will be brought to bear once again in the telling of the immigrant story. At its core, this is a story about the endurance of the human spirit. However, we also recognize how the topic of immigration has become charged and politicized. We need Sandglass, the power of their art, and the magic of puppetry to have this conversation in our community."

-Aimée M. Petrin, Executive & Artistic Director of Portland Ovations

"Babylon beautifully and poignantly portrays the journeys and tribulations of the refugees and asylum seekers whom we care for. Beyond that, the show highlights the tensions in our society around these issues, and the challenge of overcoming fear and bigotry. I was impressed at how vividly the performers, through the puppets and through music, capture the shared humanity and injustice that motivate our work and are so critical to share with others."

-Dr. James S. Miller, MD MPH MGH Global Medicine/MGH Asylum Clinic

"A show that needs to be seen by everyone, as it raises awareness of a massive challenge to countries all over the world."

- Andrew Periale, Puppetry International #44, Fall 2018

Residency Pricing



Public showing of Babylon film including talkback or panel: \$4,000

Workshop Offerings (Refugee Journeys Game, Puppetry Workshop, Crankies Workshop or Storytelling Workshop):

1st Event: \$1,250

Each additional Event: \$1,000

Classroom Visit/ Panel Discussion:

1st Visit: \$750

Each Additional Visit: \$600

Other required expenses include transportation costs, per diem, and lodging for all company artists.

Subject to negotiation and adjustments based on individualized residencies and number of artists traveling