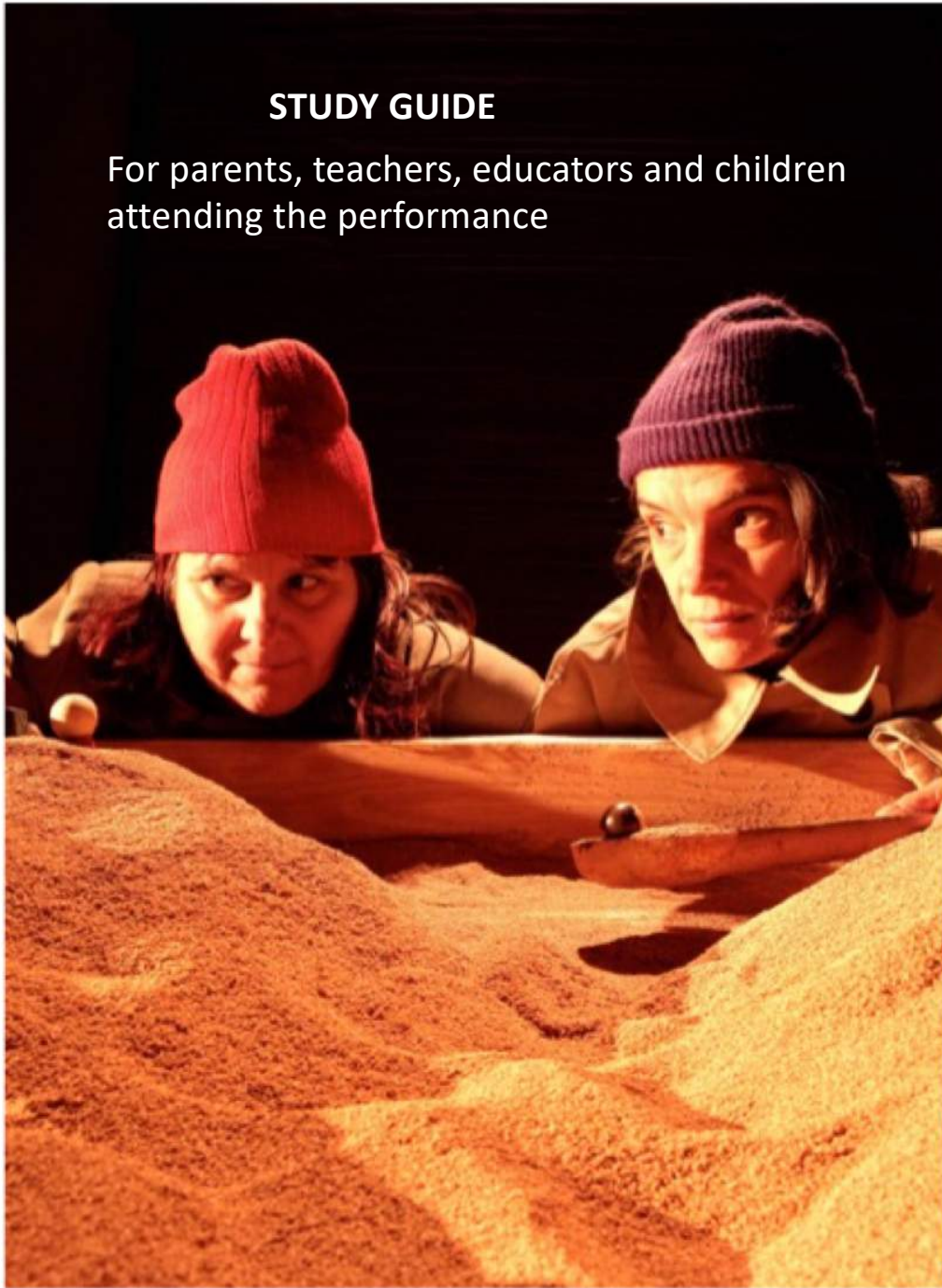


# *The Sandbox*

## **STUDY GUIDE**

For parents, teachers, educators and children attending the performance



A Tenon Mortaise Production

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Any cultural outing requires a little preparation. This document offers a few tips to help you prepare and ensure that your theatre-going experience is gratifying for both spectators and artists.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY READING OUR GUIDE.



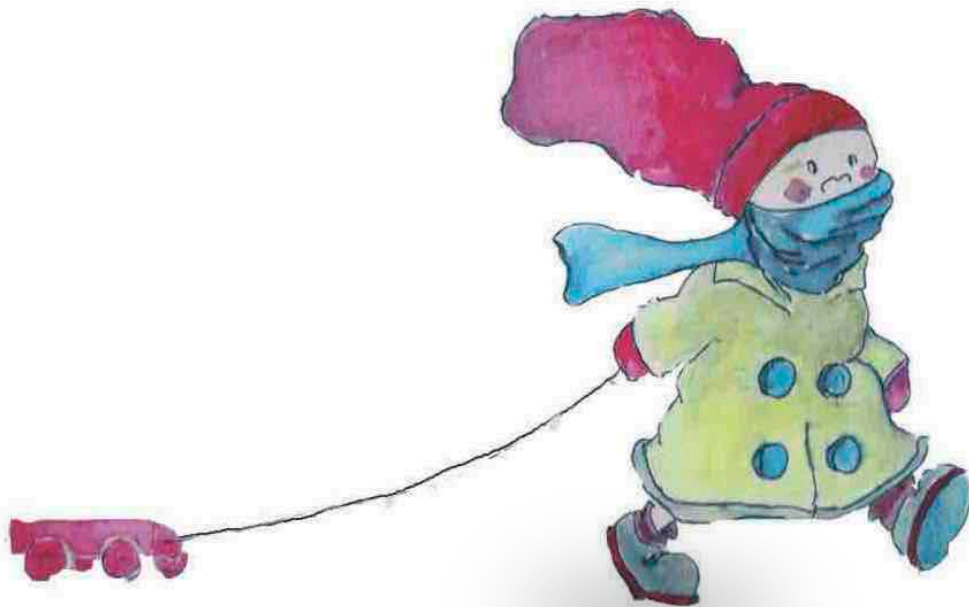
# HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

## A STUDY GUIDE IS A TOOL

Our theatre study guide is designed with parents, teachers, educators and children in mind. It contains information about the show, some food for thought about the many topics addressed in the show, as well as several educational activities.

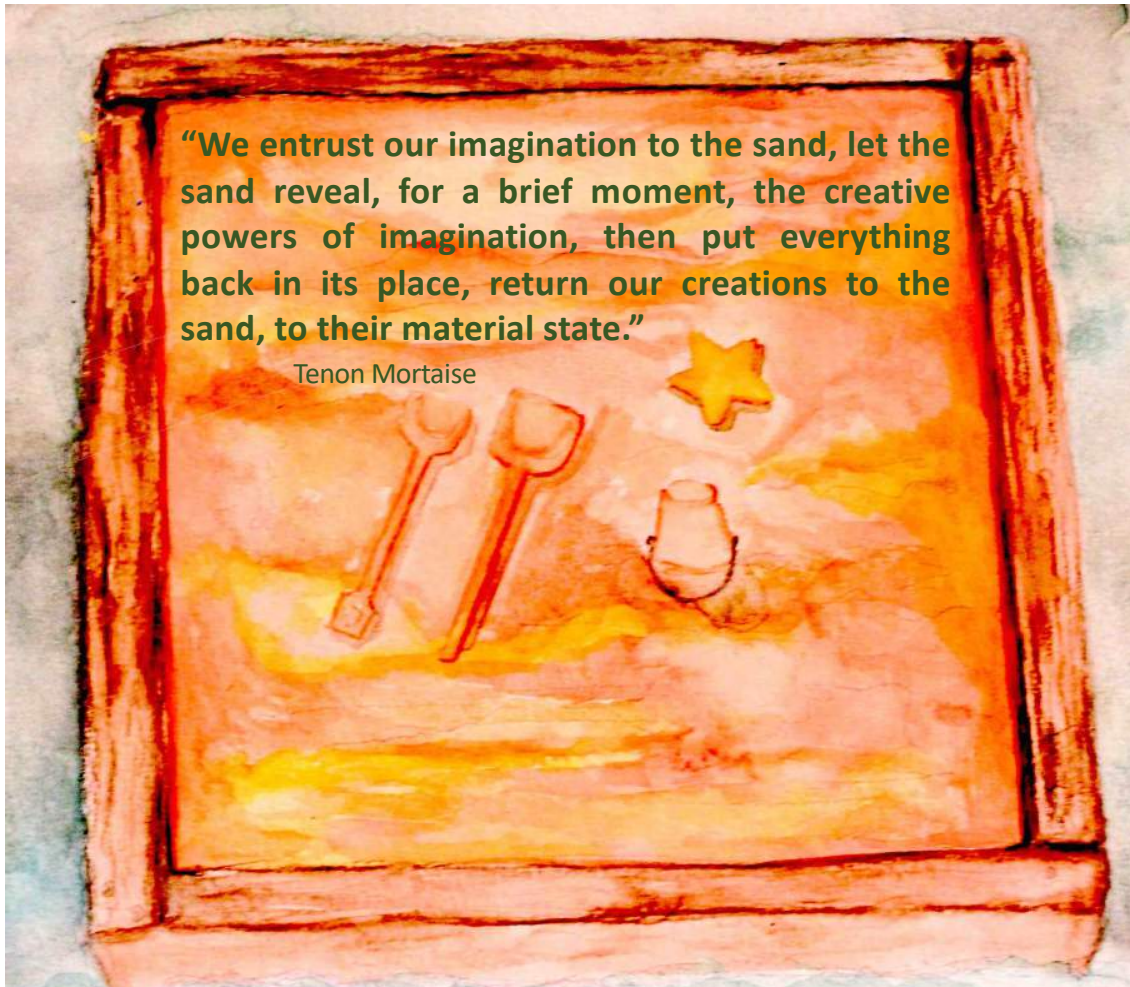
This study guide was created to help foster a pleasant rendezvous between audience and artists.

## The Sandbox



# THE SANDBOX, AN IMAGINARY PLAYGROUND FOR TODDLERS

## WHEN SAND REVEALS THE POWERS OF IMAGINATION



## THE SANDBOX, AN IMAGINARY PLAYGROUND FOR TODDLERS

From the outset, there's the sandbox, a familiar play space that sparks a child's discovery of the powers of imagination. Learning through play is an essential part of every child's development. Play fosters, among other things, their sensory stimulation. This inspired us to explore various sandbox games that evoke the five senses (smell, sight, hearing, taste and touch) by associating the senses with places and activities related to sand: the ocean, the desert, the beach, the ocean floor, a boat trip, a treasure hunt, etc.





## THE SANDBOX OBJECTS

Buckets, shovels, trucks, figurines, animals, etc. These are the objects that fill a child's imagination when playing in a sandbox.



## ANIMALS THAT LIVE IN THE SAND

The **dromedary**, also known as the Arabian camel, is a domestic mammal that lives in North Africa, the Middle East and India. It is part of the camelid family. A female camel is called a cow, a male camel is called a bull, and a baby camel is called a colt. The hump on the dromedary's back is made of fat. This animal is particularly well adapted to life in the desert because it has the ability to adapt to extreme conditions: heat, lack of food and drought.



Also known as the sand fox of the Sahara, the **fennec fox** is an omnivorous mammal that is part of the canid family. It feeds on mice, small birds, lizards and insects. Its fur is light in colour and blends with the colour of the sand.

Fennecs are born with short ears. At around three weeks, they grow quickly. When the weather is very hot, their large ears radiate body heat and help keep the fennec foxes cool.



## UNDERWATER BEACHES AND THE OCEAN FLOOR



The term “ocean floor” refers to everything found around the world at the bottom of the ocean. Beaches are coastal accumulations of sand or pebbles created by the ocean’s swells and currents. There is the oceanside beach we all know, but there is also sand at the bottom of the ocean. These are called underwater beaches. Most importantly, there are plenty of animals and plants that live in these waters and that help preserve the ocean and coastal ecosystem balance. Seaweed, fish (big and small), jellyfish... A colourful world of its own to be discovered.



## BEFORE THE SHOW...

Going to the theatre is a special event. Especially when it's your very first performing arts experience.

This part of the study guide combines learning and play. It presents pre-show activities that parents, teachers and educators can adapt according to the children's age and interests.

### Activity 1: Let's chat

To stimulate the young spectators' interest and spark their curiosity, lead a discussion about sand.

Where can you find sand?

What can you do with sand?

What is a desert?

What is a beach?

Ask children to talk about what they do when they play in a sandbox, at the beach, along the shore or elsewhere.

**Follow the discussion with a presentation of the basic behaviour rules related to a field trip to the theatre.**

What show are you about to go see?

Why do you think it's called "The Sandbox"?

What do you think we will see in the show?

Will there be real people?

Have you ever been to see a show?

What's the difference between going to the theatre and going to the movies?

Why is it important not to talk, eat or get up during a show?

### Activity 2: Simple research project

Gather up a large number of images that include sand, animals that live in the sand and the games children play in a sandbox. Have the children cut out these images and create a giant mural.

Tenon Mortaise also offers pre-show workshops that are adapted to each age group. Each 45-minute workshop costs \$100.

You can also consult the online guide for young audiences prepared by the Maison Théâtre. Follow the link for more information (in French):

<http://www.maisontheatre.com/pdf/Guide%20accompagnateur.pdf>





## SHOW DAY

At Tenon Mortaise, how we welcome young spectators is a very important part of our performance. Everything surrounding *The Sandbox* event aims to ensure that children feel comfortable and secure. We offer the following guidelines to help make your trip a pleasant one.

As soon as you arrive at the venue, in the waiting room before entering the theatre:

Leave your boots and coats in the designated area.  
Visit the bathroom in order to avoid any shifting about during the show.  
Repeat the basic behaviour rules (watch, listen, and do not interrupt or disturb the show).

Once everyone is ready, make your way to the theatre door:

Welcome staff will greet you and guide you to the performance area. As the children walk along the path to *The Sandbox's* performance area, little white lights will show them the way.

Once inside, each child will be seated on their own small cushion. The lighting will be dim, but not too dim. Onstage, two comical characters will be busy drawing a circle with sand. Once they've finished drawing their circle and the children are comfortably seated, they'll step back, rub the sand from their hands, and walk away. And the show begins...



## A FEW TIPS FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS AND TEACHERS

Children are lively and spontaneous. Their reactions are perfectly normal and the artists are used to them. You can therefore let them be free to react. However, we ask that you make sure they remain in their seat and that they do not disturb the other spectators.

### **BE ATTENTIVE TO THE CHILDREN'S NEEDS**

If a child feels uncomfortable or troubled, or needs special attention, it is best to leave the room with the child. You can always come back a little later!

### **LEAD BY EXAMPLE**

It is important that you remain focused on the story being told onstage. The children will naturally follow your lead.

### **DO NOT START A CONVERSATION**

During the show, it is important to leave the children make their own choices and not try to direct their attention. And it is best not to start up a conversation during the show in order to avoid disturbing the other spectators, both young and not-so-young, as well as the performers.

**ENJOY THE SHOW**



## THE SHOW YOU ARE ABOUT TO SEE

**THE SANDBOX** is a performance created for young audiences – toddlers, kindergarten pupils and grade schoolchildren. The show combines object theatre, puppet theatre, clowning and shadow play.

The show tells a series of sandbox-inspired short stories that are tailored to a young audience.

**THE SANDBOX** is a playful and poetic performance dotted with short stories inspired by the five senses. The show begins the moment the children enter the theatre.



Pictured: Diane Loiselle and Denys Lefebvre

Idea and story: Diane Loiselle; Stage direction and scenic writing: Denys Lefebvre; Set design: Patrice Daigneault; Music: Guido Del Fabbro; Lighting and shadows: Thomas Godefroid; Puppets, costumes and objects: Diane Loiselle; Performed by: Diane Loiselle with either Nadine Walsh or Denys Lefebvre.

**A TENON MORTAISE, MULTIDISCIPLINARY THEATRE PRODUCTION**



# THE STORY

**The Sandbox** tells the story of two comical characters playing in a sandbox.

Toy cars, buckets and shovels in hand, they take us on a journey of discovery with a little help from familiar childhood objects. Sometimes they are the best of buddies while at others, they're sulking opposites. They invite us into their imaginary and poetic worlds as they play along the seashore or race across the desert with a sand fox or a dromedary.

1

Parade music plays in the background as our two puppeteers return to performance area towing wooden toy cars. The toy car parade announces the beginning of the show. The parade ends when a toy car gets stuck...

2

Moments later, our attention is drawn to the sandbox. Together with the clowns, we watch as the sand flows softly through the light. Like raindrops steeped in a multitude of colours.

- Did you see that ? The sand. It flows! (says clown #1)
- Ah ? (answers clown #2)

3

Our two friends then have some fun discovering sand in many different places – in their shoes, in their sleeves, in a little bottle found in their pocket, etc. After every discovery, they pour their treasure into a bucket and bring it back to the sandbox. They then playfully dig deep into the sandbox to uncover a world of objects that come alive before our eyes.





# THE SHOW FEATURES...

## MANY TYPES OF PUPPETS AND OTHER ELEMENTS.

### A Sand Fox

Hand puppet: Like wearing a glove, the puppeteer manipulates the character from below with her hand.



manipulates

### A Dromedary

Moving-mouth puppet:

A hand puppet with an articulated mouth. The puppeteer's thumb is placed in the puppet's lower jaw while the other fingers activate the upper jaw.



### Fish

String marionette: This type of puppet is manipulated from above with a cross-shaped control mechanism held by the puppeteer.



above

### Sandbox Toys

Object theatre: Buckets, shovels and other objects found in a sandbox... and many more waiting to be discovered.



## Shadows

Images that appear on a screen that are generated either by silhouettes or by objects placed between the light source and the screen.

## A Set

This is where the story is told. In this show, a sandbox that evolves throughout the show is the focal point of the set.

## Clowning

We take great care in making sure our clowning approach is gentle and light-hearted, in order to focus attention on the characters' cooperation, not their antagonism. Examples of clowning techniques used during the show that resonate with children: appearing and disappearing, giving and taking, moving and standing still, tension and release, trial and error, etc.

## Music

Music establishes the show's sound atmosphere. It is a very important part of *The Sandbox*. It creates sounds that complement the actions and the characters. For example, during the sand fox hunt or the toy car parade.

## Lighting

Lighting establishes the show's visual atmosphere and adds a touch of colour.



## THE WORDS SPOKEN

The writing style required for very young audiences is simple, colourful, rhythmical, repetitive and comical. Children enjoy recognizing words they understand and they enjoy repeating them over and over again. They also like to hear the same story more than once because it is comforting.



- Did you see that? The sand.  
It flows!
- Ah?
- The sand, it flows everywhere.
- Everywhere?
- The sand, it flows everywhere.

The clowns dig deep into their pockets and pull out a handful of sand. They watch as it flows gently between their fingers.

- Did you see that? There's some  
in my hand.
- Ah! And I have some in my  
pocket.
- Ah!



# AFTER THE SHOW

You may want to have a talk-back with the children after the show. The following are a few activities that will help foster communication and discussion.

**KEY COMPETENCIES: COMMUNICATE APPROPRIATELY, EXERCISE CRITICAL JUDGMENT**

## **DISCUSSION**

### **THE CHARACTERS**

How many characters were there in the show?  
Were they dressed the same?  
What was different?  
Were they brothers? Sisters? Friends?

### **SHADOWS – LIGHT – COLOUR – PUPPETS**

How many puppets were there in the show?  
What type of puppets were they?  
What did you see on the screen?

### **THE STORY**

What were the two characters doing in the show?  
What were they playing?  
How did they play?  
What did they play with?  
What did you like about the show? Why?  
What didn't you like about the show? Why?





# PLAYFUL ACTIVITIES

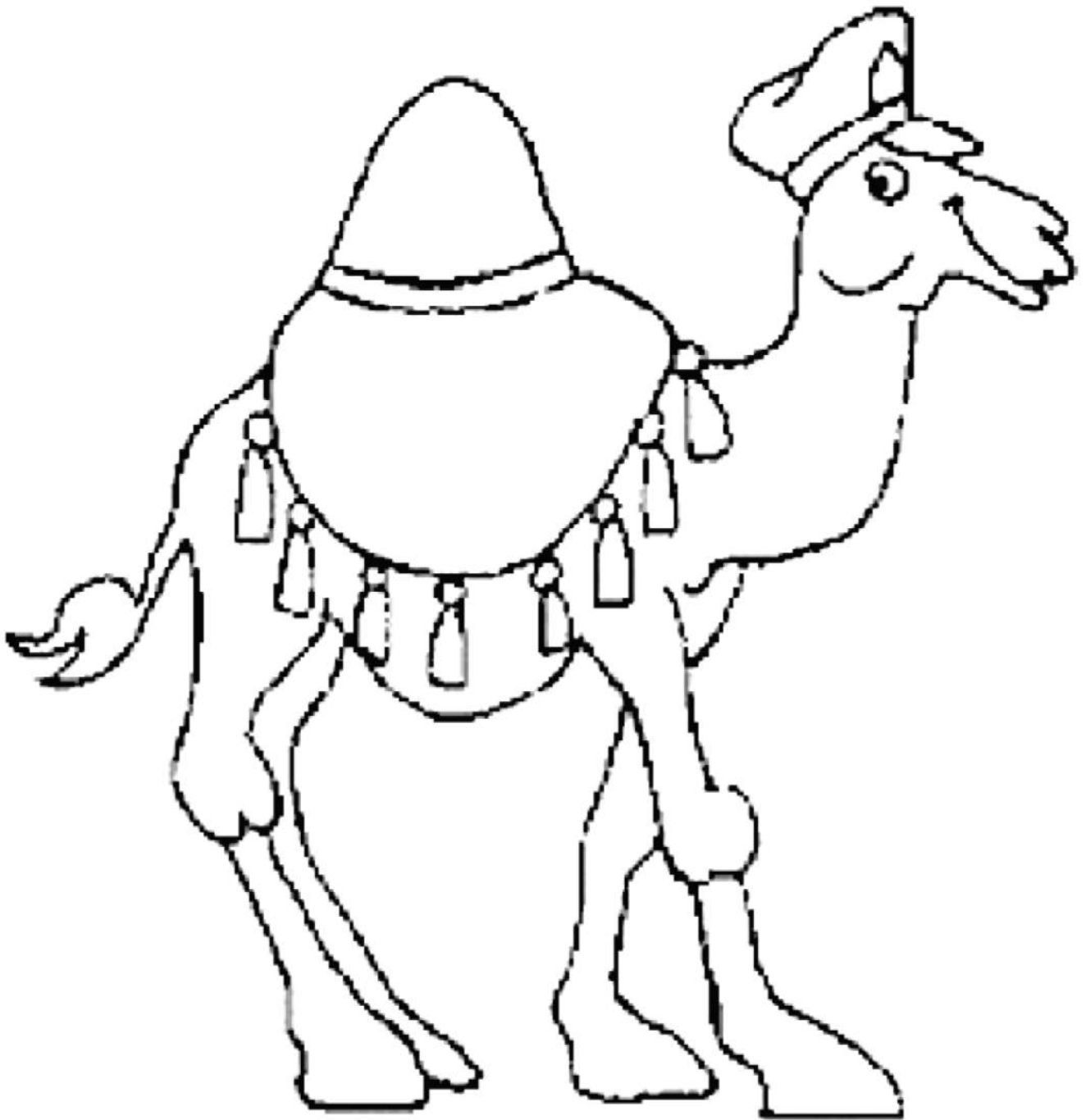


**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please photocopy the following section so that every child can enjoy the activities related to *The Sandbox* show.



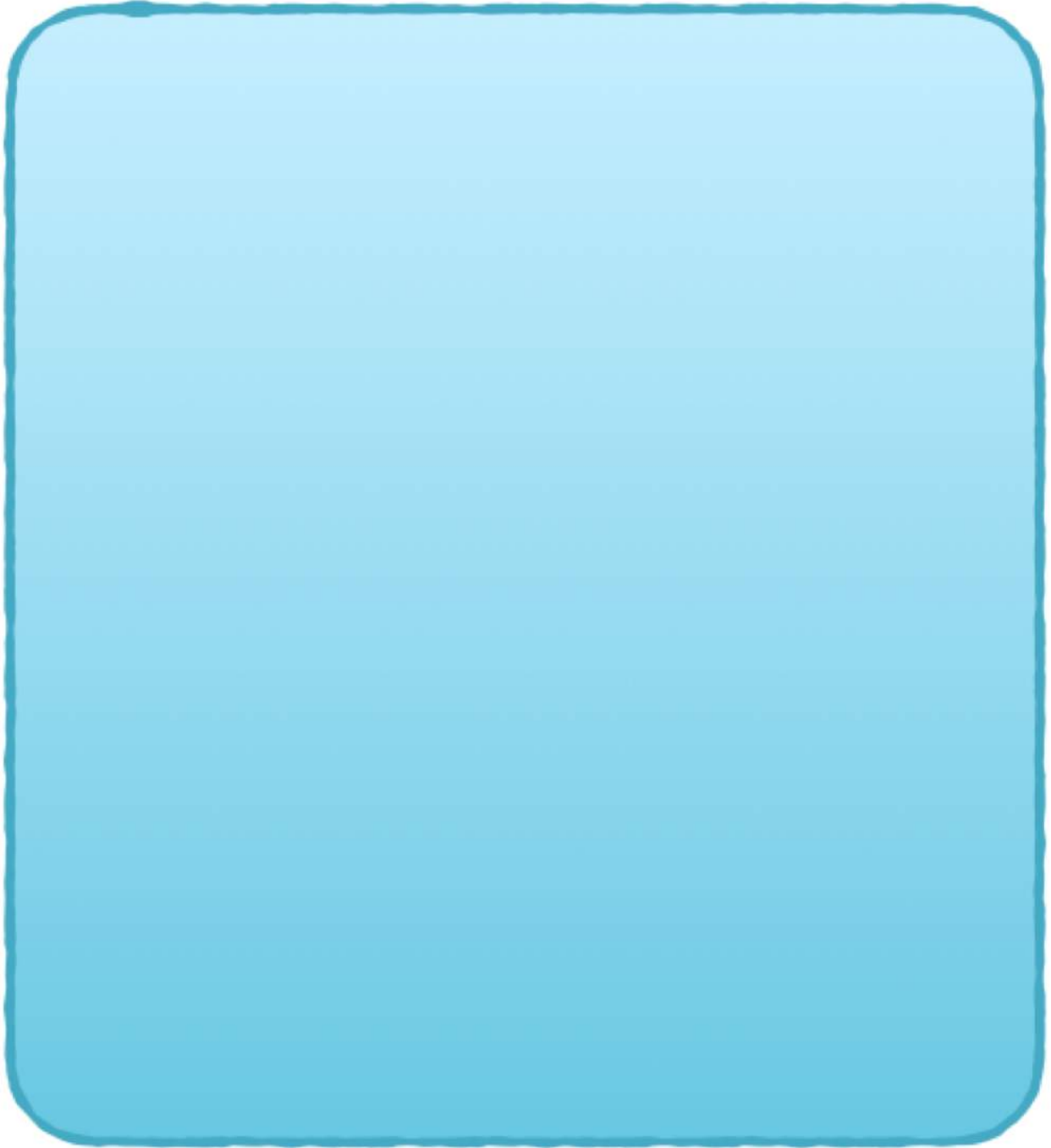
# COLOUR THE DROMEDARY



COLOUR THE SAND FOX



DRAW YOUR OCEAN FLOOR





CIRCLE THE OBJECTS THAT YOU SAW  
IN THE SANDBOX SHOW



## CREATE WITH SALT DOUGH



When playing on the beach, we all love to leave our footprints in the sand. Here's a simple recipe for creating an imprint of an object or even create your very own object.

### Make your own dough

- One part salt
- One part water
- Two parts flour
- Mix and knead well
- For extra colour, add a dash of food colouring or powdered chalk before mixing.
- It's ready to go!



For more information:

French: <http://www.momes.net/Bricolages/Astuces-bricolages-de-Momes/La-recette-de-la-pate-a-sel-maison>

English: <https://www.learning4kids.net/2012/12/09/how-to-make-salt-dough-recipe/>



## TENON MORTAISE, THE COMPANY

Established in 1996 by Denys Lefebvre and Diane Loiselle, Tenon Mortaise creates, produces and performs multidisciplinary shows for family and adult audiences. The company is at the crossroads of various genres, combining theatre, mime, dance, puppet theatre and shadow puppetry as well as pictorial art and video. Tenon Mortaise breaks with traditional theatrical conventions and prefers to work with a dramaturgy based on body language that combines various genres. Tenon Mortaise has produced and performed over 17 shows in Montréal, Québec, Ontario and Europe. The company's cultural mediation program has led over 600 workshops in schools and daycare centres and reached more than 10,000 children.

### OTHER SHOWS

2017 *Le projet Beckett* / 2015 *Le carré de sable* / 2014 *Rapaces ou victimes?* / 2013 *Les Petits Chaperons rouges* / 2011 *La tragique histoire comique de Punch & Judy* / 2010 *The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of Punch & Judy* / 2008 *Punch et Co.* / 2007 *L'homme de la remise* / 2006 *Et Hamlet, et Faust, et Punch, et ...etc.* / 2003 *Le pantin de bois* / 2001 *L'insaisissable mandarin* / 1999 *Bartok, l'impossible retour* / 1998 *Ex Abrupto* / 1998 *Le conte de l'homme et de l'étoile* / 1997 *Héloïse, la justification d'une passion* / 1995 *Les Lingères légères* / 1995 *Le K. de mlle Bürstner* / 1993 *Kafkafèlà!?* / 1992 *Solo pour deux*

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Tenon Mortaise receives financial support from the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Conseil des arts de Montréal.



## Additional information

### A selection of theatre trades

It takes many different people and talents to put together a show. There are, of course, the actors, but there are also other, very important artists.

#### **Playwright**

The playwright writes the story as it is to be presented on stage.

#### **Stage director**

The stage director is somewhat like an orchestra conductor.

#### **Set designer**

The set designer designs the physical space in which the story will be told.

#### **Music and soundscape artist**

The music and soundscape artist composes the music and creates the show's sound environment.

#### **Lighting designer**

The lighting designer designs the lighting for the show.

#### **Costume designer**

The costume designer designs the show's costumes.

#### **Puppeteer**

The puppeteer creates puppets and brings them to life on the stage.



Study guide created by: Diane Loiselle  
Layout and image research: Diane  
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Lefebvre

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