

# Tales of Legendary Florida

Donna Wissinger and Joy Myers, ARTZ OUT LOUD



## An Educator's Guide Grades 3-5

### Welcome to the show!

Music, visual art, and beautiful media turn the pages of over **500 years of Florida history**. An introduction into the lives of the first inhabitants of the land through beautiful and intriguing images and music immediately engages students. Pulitzer prize winning author Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, played by Joy Myers, challenges the actions of the characters who shaped Florida. Students sail into the adventure of crossing oceans and sighting land with conquistador Ponce de Leon. The land he saw was bursting with greenery and flowers of every color, 'Pascua Florida'! Students step into the gentle footprints of William Bartram, our first naturalist, to see the landscape and wildlife through his drawings and Jackson Walker's descriptive and detailed paintings. Students renew their **science vocabulary** to understand how humans have impacted Florida since Bartram's writings and notes. Following Rawlings' lead, students learn to question and to **compare and contrast** the actions of the historical figures allowing students to **feel history as living and relevant**. Robert Kerr's wondrous music, composed for this program, carries students into the heart of the characters and their adventures. All aboard! Students hop Flagler's amazing train for a final wild boogie-woogie ride across water to Key West! **50 minutes**

# Before the show

Dear Teachers,

Students will gain confidence and have greater retention with some preparation. It will also assist you in creating richer follow-up after the program. For **Grades 3-5** review Florida history particularly the native peoples, Ponce de Leon, William Bartram, Chief Osceola, and Henry Flagler. Review or discuss reasons for reading, learning and studying history.

**Review of Knowledge:** some general information for review

- When Ponce de Leon first sighted land near present day Cape Canaveral in 1513, as many as 150,000 native people lived in the place he christened La Florida (Feast of Flowers).
- People had been living on the land for at least *10,000 years*
- Timucua, Apalachee, Pensacola, Calusa, Creek, and Tequesta are some of the original inhabitants. Tragically, they lacked immunity to Old World diseases; many perished due to ill treatment and disease.
- Spanish explorers were seeking gold, trade routes and the Fountain of Youth. Some of note were: Ponce de Leon; Panfilo de Narvaez; Hernando de Soto; Tristan de Luna
- The oldest city in North America is St. Augustine
- Florida flew under 5 different flags: Spanish, French, British, Confederate and United States. Its rich history makes it unique.

**The artist uses the following definitions:**

- Threatened: numbers of a species becoming critically low
- Endangered: numbers of a species critically low, unless there is intervention the species is likely to become extinct
- Extinct: there are no living individuals of the species
- Conquistadors: Soldiers and explorers of the Spanish and Portuguese Empires who conquered and claimed territory for their Kings
- Naturalist: a person who researches and observes living organisms in their own environments, such as plants and animals
- Pulitzer prize for fiction: It recognizes distinguished fiction by an American author, preferably dealing with American life

## Topics for Reflection

- Why study history?  
History is a subject about people who dared to live their lives courageously. It illuminates their triumphs, their shortcomings, and the unknown consequences of their actions.
- What value do stories from long ago or from different cultures have for you? (Examples: Stories can give us ideas about how to best write our own life stories. We can see behaviors or character traits that we can use or reject. By learning about others we can learn compassion and have understanding of other's lives. We can affirm or develop our own dreams of great life adventures.)
- What kinds of books do you like to read? Why? (As a child I gravitated toward biographies and autobiographies. My siblings were inclined towards fairy tells and fiction. The stories we choose can give us insights into who we are and who we would like to be.)

## Some information about characters in the program:

**Ponce de Leon (1460-1521):** A conquistador who sailed with Christopher Columbus, Ponce de Leon became the first Governor of Puerto Rico by appointment of the Spanish King. He led the first known European expedition to *La Florida*, which he named during his first voyage to the land in 1513. He was thought to be searching for the Fountain of Youth. Ponce de León returned to Southwest Florida in 1521 to establish a Spanish colony, it would have been the first in what is now the continental United States. However, the native people called Calusa fiercely resisted the invasion, and Ponce de León was seriously wounded. The colonization attempt was abandoned, and its leader died from his wounds soon after returning to Cuba.

**William Bartram (1739-1823):** William Bartram was one of our first naturalists. In 1773, he embarked upon a four-year journey through eight southern colonies including Florida. He made many drawings and took notes on the native plants (flora) and animals (fauna) and the native people. In 1774, he explored the St. Johns River, where he had incredible encounters with aggressive alligators; his notes about alligator behavior have been confirmed by scientists today! Bartram also visited a large Seminole village at Cuscowilla. His respect for nature and for all people was celebrated with a great feast. Ahaya, known as the Cowkeeper, chief of the Alachua band of the Seminole tribe, began calling Bartram *Puc Puggy* (the flower hunter) because of his interest in plants and his beautiful drawings of all he saw.



**Chief Osceola (1804-1838):** Named Billy Powell at birth, he became an influential leader of the Seminole people in Florida. His parentage was Creek, Scottish, black and English; he was raised as a Creek by his mother. When he was a child, he and his mother, with other Red Stick refugees, moved to Florida after a disastrous defeat in the Creek Wars. In 1836, Osceola led a small group of warriors in the Seminole resistance when the United States tried to remove the tribe from their lands in Florida. Osceola led the war resistance until he was captured in September 1837 by deception, under a flag of truce,<sup>[2]</sup> when he went to a meeting for peace talks.

**Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings (1896-1953):** Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings was an American author who lived in rural Florida and wrote novels about her life in Cross Creek. Her best-known work, *The Yearling*, about a boy who adopts an orphaned fawn, won a Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1939; it was later made into a movie. Marjorie filled many notebooks with descriptions of the people, animals, plants, the Southern dialect, and recipes, all of which she used in her writings. Marjorie had a keen eye for detail and, through her writings, introduced the world to Florida.

**Henry Flagler (1830-1913):** Henry Flagler was an American industrialist and a founder of Standard Oil. Sometimes called the father of St. Augustine, Miami and Palm Beach, he built grand hotels and the railroads that connected people and places in Florida. Although he often did not treat people well, by the end of his life he had learned to value people more than money and his own accomplishments. Flagler did what everyone said was impossible; he built the overseas railroad to Key West.

## Florida Standards that connect to the performance experience:

- **SS.3.A.1.In.c:** Relate the term “history” to events from the past, “geography” to locations, and “economics” to money
- **SS.4.A.3.In.j:** Recognize that the Seminole tribe wanted to stay in Florida, but the United States fought wars against them and forced them to leave.
- **SS.4.A.3.In.a:** Recognize a European explorer who came to Florida, such as Ponce de Leon, who came to find slaves and riches.
- **SS.4.A.3.In.b:** Identify effects of European colonization on Native American tribes in Florida, such as slavery and new diseases.
- **SS.4.A.3.In.c:** Recognize St. Augustine as the oldest permanent European settlement in the United States.
- **LAFS.5.SL.1.AP.1a** Make appropriate comments that contribute to a collaborative discussion.

## Theater Etiquette

Dear Teachers,

Your excitement is an essential part of excellent preparation for students. Your students can also understand their role in creating a fun and exciting experience. Please review or explain the following:

- There are many chances to answer questions and participate. If hands are raised then everyone will have a chance to share what they know; this feels good and teaches awareness and self-control.
- Sometimes everyone will be invited to answer together, sometimes the artist will ask for raising hands. Be courteous and alert!



## **Performance Etiquette Reflection Activity**

For reflection: In what ways does the audience have a role in the performance?

- How is a performance different than watching TV?  
Remember that the performers are in the room with you and can hear you and feel your interest and actions.
- How does being involved increase your own enjoyment?

## **Information relating to performance genre and content**

For teachers: The artist uses many dynamics, props, and tones in her voice to create interest and meaning. She also uses her body movements and the room to engage students. Every student will be honored for his or her answers and participation.

**Participation:** The artist asks questions that encourages thinking. Teachers can **practice skills in the classroom of speaking clearly and in a voice that can be heard by others.**

## **After the Show**

### **Language Arts 3-5:**

1. Ask students to form a circle. Using characters from the program, select one student to begin describing their thoughts about a character played in the program and their actions. Students can describe what they liked and how the actions of the character shaped Florida. Upon cue from the teacher, another student continues their reflections upon the same character. The teacher can determine when to select another character or to continue as needed to engage all students. Teachers can ask students to provide examples that support their thoughts. This can also be done as a writing exercise.

#### **LAFS.3.RL.1.2**

Recount stories from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

#### **LAFS.3.RL.1.3**

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

2. Use a similar exercise through small group discussion and sharing of idea through presentation.

3. Ask students to write a narrative about their favorite character and their actions.

### **LAFS.4.W.1.2**

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

4. Ask students to research various accounts of a historical figure such as Ponce de Leon, Chief Osceola, or William Bartram. Discuss or use as a writing exercise their findings and the possible reasons for various accounts. When appropriate, ask students to reflect upon various viewpoints in current affairs.

### **LAFS.5.RI.2.6**

Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

5. Ask students to complete the Inventory of Learning as teams or individually to further solidify knowledge. Ask students to elaborate upon questions 3 and 6.

6. Ask students to share their impressions of the program and what parts they enjoyed and why.



Henry Morrison Flagler

## **Inventory of Learning: Choose the best answer**

**1. History provides a means for us to evaluate actions and their consequences.** True      False

**2. Ponce de Leon**

- a. sailed with Columbus
- b. was Governor of Puerto Rico
- c. landed on Florida soil in 1513
- d. all of the above

**3. William Bartram was:**

- a. a conquistador
- b. a naturalist who respected plants, animals, and people

**4. Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings wrote**

- a. The Yearling   b. Grapes of Wrath   c. On Golden Pond

**5. Choose the incorrect meaning**

- a. Extinct: a few individuals left in a species
- b. Endangered: few numbers of a species; without intervention may become extinct

**6. We are each responsible for:**

- a. the writing of our life stories
- b. depending upon others to live our lives for us
- c. we have no responsibility for our life stories



## About the Artist

**Flutist Donna Wissinger** has been called a '*flutist of rare gifts*' by the New York Times. Her concerts include acclaimed solo recitals on the mainstages of **Carnegie Hall** and on the equally renowned **Glinka Capella** in St. Petersburg, Russia. Featured tours have included Europe, Asia, The Middle East, Australia, and New Zealand.

Donna's great passion is combining fun and real learning for unforgettable educational programs. Her programs, including *The Pied Piper and other Fantastic Tales*, *Peter and the Wolf*, *The World Turned Upside Down: Music of the American Revolution*, *Tales of Legendary Florida*, and *Preserving Our Coral Reefs: Teams of Success* and the accompanying programs with orchestra receive rave reviews.

Donna is the inaugural recipient of the prestigious **Doris Leeper Award for Excellence in Arts Education** and is a premier artist with Creative Leaps International; the Florida Touring Program; and The New York based Learning Arts. Donna enjoys being fit. She is a USPTA tennis professional, a long distance runner, and an internationally ranked USTA long distance triathlete. Her bicycle/flute performance tour of cycling 2000 miles and playing 82 concerts from NYC to Miami was featured on the National Geographic Channel. To learn more visit [www.donnawissinger.com](http://www.donnawissinger.com).

