

# Crabgrass Puppet Theatre

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## African Adventure Tales

### Press Release

Two funny folktales from Africa come to life with vibrant puppets, spectacular scenery, and an infectious musical score. "Koi and the Kola Nuts" is a tale from Liberia in which the young son of a chief sets out on a wonderful journey in search of fortune, carrying only a sack of kola nuts. His kindness to the creatures he meets is rewarded when their help saves his life! And in "Anansi and the Talking Melon," we meet one of the most hilarious trickster characters in world folklore.

In "Koi and the Kola Nuts," the youngest son of a Chief learns that his only inheritance is a scraggly kola tree. "You do not know how to treat the son of a chief!" Koi tells his village, and decides to travel the world. With only a sack of kola nuts on his back, he sets out on a wonderful journey in search of his place in the world. In his travels, he meets three creatures who are in need: a snake with a sick mother, a frantic army of ants fleeing the Forest Devil, and a repentant crocodile facing the wrath of the Rainmaker, whose dog he ate. All of the creatures are in dire need of kola nuts – the one thing Koi has – and Koi willingly gives away his inheritance to help the others. When Koi arrives at the next village empty-handed, no one believes that he is the son of a chief. The villagers insist that he prove himself by performing three impossible tasks. Impossible for Koi, perhaps, but not for his new friends, who seize the opportunity to repay Koi's kindness. "He truly is the son of a chief!" the people cry, and welcome him to their village.

In "Anansi and the Talking Melon," lazy Anansi eats his way into Elephant's melon and is too bloated to crawl out. The clever trickster decides this is a perfect opportunity to have some fun, and convinces Elephant that he owns a talking melon. Elephant can hardly believe his ears: "Wow! A talking melon!" Elephant takes the melon to Hippo, who is amazed: "I've never heard of a talking melon!" When Warthog hears the melon talk, he is astounded. "You have to show the King!" So Elephant sets off to demonstrate his miraculous melon to King Monkey. When the melon refuses to speak to the King, however, he becomes so angry that he kicks the melon far, far away, where it cracks open . . . and Anansi crawls out, thin again (after all that activity), and on the lookout for his next meal!

Jamie Keithline and Bonny Hall formed Crabgrass Puppet Theatre in San Francisco in 1982 and have delighted audiences across the nation with their whimsical humor and puppetry. Their performing venues have included the Detroit Institute of Art, the Smithsonian, Paper Mill Playhouse, Tribeca Performing Arts Center, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. They have been awarded two Citations of Excellence from UNIMA-USA, the highest puppetry award in the United States, and in 2009, Bonny was awarded a Design Commendation from the Arlyn Award Foundation.

For more information on Crabgrass Puppet Theatre, visit [www.crabgrasspuppets.com](http://www.crabgrasspuppets.com).