Journeys Home: Revealing a Zuni-Appalachia Collaboration

Edited by Dudley Cocke, Donna Portersfield, and Edward Wemytewa

Zuni A:shiwi Publishing
“Difficulty in evaluating, or even discerning, a particular landscape is related to the distance a culture has traveled from its own ancestral landscape.”

It was our good fortune that the staff of Zuni A:shiwi Publishing approached Roadside Theater and Idiwanan An Chawe about making this book after attending a performance of the play *Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain: Following the Seasons*. The idea was enthusiastically supported by the publishing company’s board of directors: Georgia Epaloose—president, Malcolm Bowekaty, Jim Enoté, Rueben Ghahate, and Tom Kennedy. Anne Beckett, executive director, worked generously with the collaborators to raise funds for the project and conducted interviews with the principals. We are grateful to our production partners, copy editor Liz McGeachy, designer Jane Hillhouse, and illustrator Angelyn DeBord. Further gratitude is extended to Jimmy A’washu for sharing the Turkey Girl story; to Craig McGarvey, who read the draft and provided us with fresh insights; to Elaine and Roger Thomas, who allowed us to turn their Halona B & B into a recording studio; and to Barry Lopez for his encouragement and permission to quote from *Arctic Dreams*. Taki Telonidis and Hal Cannon joined the project to produce the compact disc, and their abiding enthusiasm has ended up informing all of the work.

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Foundations take chances on unusual projects because of unusual individuals working within them. Without Melanie Beene (Hewlett), Catherine Wichterman (Mellon), Holly Sidford (Reader’s Digest Funds), Sonja Kravanja and Stephen Schwartz (Witter Bynner), Olga Garay (Duke), and Marina Drummer (LEF) there would be no occasion for this acknowledgement.

Finally, we’d like to express our gratitude to all the Zuni and Appalachian families who extended gracious hospitality to us . . . for the healthy food, the good conversation, and the laughter.
# Table of Contents

5 **Foreword** by Gregory Cajete  
Dr. Cajete, educator, author, and member of the Santa Clara Pueblo in New Mexico, writes about the importance of story and place.

7 **Introduction** by the editors  
Meet the two theater companies and hear how the artists began to collaborate.

11 **The Zuni Language—Shiwi'ma Bena:we** by Wilfred Eriacho, Sr. and Edward Wemytewa  
The history of the Zuni language is related by two of the people responsible for inventing the Zuni alphabet.

17 **Appalachia—Historical Background** by the editors

19 **The Appalachian Dialect—Guilt and the Past Participle: True Confessions from the Appalachian Diaspora** by Tony Earley  
Novelist Earley describes his journey from native speaker of the Appalachian vernacular to university English professor.

23 **The Story of a Collaboration** by Dinah Zeiger  
In journalist Zeiger's story, the collaborating artists tell about the often humorous ups and downs of writing and producing the play Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain: Following the Seasons.
**Table of Contents, conclusion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td><strong>Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain: Following the Seasons</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Dowa Yalanne/Ashek'ya Yalanne: Debikwayinan Idulohha</strong>&lt;br&gt;by Idiwanan An Chawe and Roadside Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Zuni and English language versions of the play are printed in their entirety. The Zuni version, translated by Wilfred Eriacho, Sr. and Edward Wemytewa, represents the most inclusive example of written Zuni extant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td><strong>Contributors</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td><strong>Compact Disc</strong>&lt;br&gt;Produced by Dudley Cocke and Taki Telonidis with Hal Cannon, the CD contains stories and music from Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain mixed with stories the artists tell about the everyday experiences that inspired them to write a particular song or story.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** In *Journeys Home*, the word Zuni is used generically, as it is used by the Zuni people, to mean the Zuni Pueblo, one Zuni person, many Zuni people, all Zuni people, and the Zuni language. For example, I am going to Zuni to see a Zuni friend whose family is Zuni, all of whom speak fluent Zuni. In their own language, Shiwi'ma Bena:we, such differences are finely delineated.
Sixteen hundred miles separate Zuni’s Corn Mountain, Dowa Yalanne, from Appalachia’s Pine Mountain.
Foreword

by Gregory Cajete

The stories of Journeys Home are stories of origin: about how things came to be, about why things are the way they are, and about the relationships of humans with plants, animals, and mountains. They are stories of childhood memories and of similar experiences with life’s hardships. They are stories and songs of respect: respect for corn and for planting; respect for Turkey Spirits whose sharing of their life ensures the continuance of human life. They are stories of the difficulty of keeping traditions going in the face of rapid social and technological change, where the vicarious experience provided by the TV, the DVD, and the Internet has usurped the direct experience. They are stories of the spirits, good and bad, that inhabit our communal world.

In many ways, Zuni Pueblo, New Mexico, one of the oldest continually occupied settlements in North America, is as different from the settlements in Appalachia’s eastern Kentucky as can be imagined. But there are easily overlooked similarities as well. Both places are rural, off the beaten track; they are places that most Americans pass through on their way to someplace else; they are places where people still tell stories directly to one another.

Humans are storytelling animals. Story is a primary linguistic structure through which we think and communicate. We make stories, tell stories, and live stories because it is such an integral part of being human. For example, myths, legends, and folk tales have been a cornerstone of teaching in every culture. These forms of story teach us about human nature in its many dimensions and manifestations. The stories we live by actively shape and integrate our life experience. They inform us, as well as form us.
There are as many ways to tell a story as there are storytellers, and as many ways to hear a story as well. American Indian tribes created a variety of vehicles—spoken word, song, dance, craft, and visual art—to access the inherent energy and knowledge contained in their body of stories. While keeping true to the core meanings of their stories, tribal storytellers continually improvised, reorganized, and recreated the particular elements of a story to fit their audience, the time and place, and their own personal expression. In reality, every story is renewed each time and in each place it is told. Stories live through each teller and through each audience which hears and actively engages them. Stories and their enactment in every form was the way a tribe remembered its shared experience as a People.

The stories in *Journeys Home* are remembered in the heart. They emphasize the importance of maintaining a way of language...a loving way of speaking about life and experiences. Feeling the rhythm of the storytellers' language is to feel the rhythm of their Peoples' spirit and of the remembered earth of their communities.

I invite you to journey to Appalachia's Pine Mountain...to journey to Zuni's Corn Mountain...and to find some of your own journey in the stories of these *Journeys Home*.

May the Good Spirits guide you.

*Gregory Cajete*

*Santa Clara Pueblo, New Mexico*
Introduction

by the editors

Journeys Home is the story of the sixteen-year collaboration between artists from two cultures. Sixteen hundred miles west to east across the United States separate Zuni’s Corn Mountain from Appalachia’s Pine Mountain, while nine thousand years of history in North America separate the Native American experience from the European American experience. How then did traditional artists from these two distinct cultures come to make plays together? This is the story of Journeys Home.

Whitesburg, Kentucky When we started Roadside Theater back in 1975, we asked ourselves, What would it be like for rural Appalachia to have a professional theater company and a body of original Appalachian drama? We joined up with some other young people who had grown up in the coalfields of Appalachia. They had started a media arts organization in Whitesburg, Kentucky, called the Appalachian Film Workshop, soon to be known as Appalshop.

Founded in 1969 as part of a national War on Poverty job training program for disadvantaged youth, Appalshop unexpectedly turned its attention to telling the Appalachian story to the region and nation from the inside-out. Its medium was documentary film, and its subjects were local people and events—a hog butchering, the birth of twins assisted by a midwife, foot washing at the Old Regular Baptist Church.

Filmmaking led these young people to an astounding discovery: their Appalachian pictures and the stories that they told had more substance and truth than those made in Los Angeles or New York City. This was an empowering realization for those of us who had too often seen ourselves portrayed by the mass media as hillbillies—inferior folk from corrupted bloodlines.

"Roadside’s audience was coalminers and farmers, preachers and teachers, the employed and the unemployed, and everyone’s extended family."
Appalshop youth were suddenly turning the stereotype on its head, and word was spreading across the rural region.

Just as there had been no Appalachian filmmaking tradition prior to 1969, in 1975 there was no regional habit of attending or making theater. Excited by Appalshop’s idea of telling the Appalachian story in the Appalachian voice, a half-dozen youth asked themselves, *Theater-wise, what does our Appalachian culture have going for it?* The ready answer was the traditions we’d all grown up with—storytelling, balladry, oral histories, and dramatic church services, all living and breathing in a rich regional dialect. These local traditions became the foundation for Roadside Theater’s twenty-six-year experiment with drama.

Since we had little money, a scattered population, and no building with a theater, we began as a touring company, often performing in a revival-style tent pitched in church yards, next to community centers and schools, up the hollows of our mountains. Roadside’s audience was coalminers and farmers, preachers and teachers, the employed and the unemployed, and everyone’s extended family. The lives and stories of these people became the source material for our plays, our performances a way to thank our people for their gift.

As the attraction of Roadside Theater’s plays and our way of playmaking spread beyond Appalachia, we began collaborating with other artists and communities wanting to tell their stories from the inside-out. That’s when we began visiting Zuni Pueblo in New Mexico, at first performing in the schools and eventually with traditional Zuni artists.
Zuni, New Mexico

It was through our sixteen-year cultural exchange with Roadside Theater and Appalachia that Idiwanan An Chawe emerged here in Zuni. It was a slow birth, beginning with just watching Roadside do its thing in our schools. Their storytelling and singing style was like nothing any of us had ever seen, and our youth really responded to it. Gradually, following the lead of the young people, several of us working in the middle school began sharing some of our traditional culture with the Roadside performers—our songs, dances, and stories. And we began taking some of our students to visit Roadside in their mountain home. That was an eye-opener, because most of us had never been out of the Southwest, much less to Appalachia.

The experience of these visits led us to the idea of finding a way to support our Zuni storytelling tradition. In the 1960s there were still many Zuni storytellers to be heard, but by the late 1970s, the radio and television had become our storytellers and our own traditional storytellers were no longer invited into our homes. So we invited one of our traditional storytellers into the middle school. Her session with the students was not successful. We realized that our young people had never learned the Zuni storytelling etiquette—they didn’t understand their role as listener and encourager. After we explained the etiquette to them, they invited a storyteller to a dinner they cooked. The lesson paid off. The kids were very respectful, so the storyteller, feeling comfortable, sat down after dinner and told stories. Captured by the stories, the students had many questions for us at school the next day. Eventually, some of us younger adults began learning

"In the 1960s there were still many Zuni storytellers to be heard, but by the late 1970s, the radio and television had become our storytellers and our own traditional storytellers were no longer invited into our homes."
the old stories and telling them together at the middle school.

In 1995, we began collaborating with Roadside on an original, bilingual play, *Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain: Following the Seasons*. Well, if you’re going to start creating plays, it follows that you need a theater company, and that’s how *Idiwanan An Chawe* was born. *Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain* premiered in Zuni on February 16, 1996, and in Whitesburg on March 15, 1996. Since then we have toured the play to some very interesting places, like New Orleans.

*Idiwanan An Chawe* means Children of the Middle Place, and is another name for the Zuni people. We continue to tell stories in our Zuni schools, and we now also make original plays drawn from our culture’s song, dance, costuming, oral history, and storytelling traditions. Tribally sponsored, we rely on the knowledge of community elders and are especially concerned with providing opportunities for our young people to participate.

All of *Idiwanan An Chawe*’s plays are about our place, and often they confront issues swirling around the health and care of our reservation. For example, *Ma’l Okeyatsik An Denihalowilli:we (Gifts from Salt Woman)* is a play about the physical and spiritual care of the Zuni Salt Lake. The play raises issues of United States government violation of Zuni sovereignty rights. Our plays (and radio dramas, which we also produce) are written and performed in the Zuni language, *Shiwi’ma Bena:we*.

When Roadside Theater and Zuni began working together, we were young. With the light-heartedness of youth, we committed ourselves to a twenty-year collaboration. Now sixteen years older, we agree that twenty is too short.
The story of the Zuni language is a story about tradition, religion, education, and interference. The very name Zuni was coined by Spanish chroniclers in 1539. We call ourselves A:shiwi. One Zuni person is Shiwi. The language of the A:shiwi is Shiwi'ma Bena:we. Unlike most languages, such as English with its Germanic roots, Shiwi'ma Bena:we is a language isolate, which means that it is unrelated to any known language, even to those languages of our pueblo neighbors to the east along the Rio Grande and our Hopi neighbors to the west. Shiwi'ma Bena:we is a living language and is spoken by all A:shiwi people today. The amount of Zuni spoken and its overall quality varies, of course, and both have been affected by the separation of generations caused by new settlement patterns, by the introduction of other languages, notably English, and in the last fifty years by the electronic media’s version of English, such as we hear on television.

Traditionally, the A:shiwi lived in close quarters in a pueblo composed of a plaza surrounded by apartment-style adobe buildings, sometimes rising eight stories. People of all ages lived together. Today, although changed in appearance, the old pueblo is still where most of the communal houses, the kivas, and the religious dance halls are located. In the center of the pueblo is a shrine that designates the Heart. The village’s physical environment has been as essential to the transmission of our traditions as the presence of our grandmothers and grandfathers. Over the past thirty years, partly in response to our growing population (now numbering 10,000) and to federal government housing regulations, many Zunis have moved away from the Heart into single-family houses, each, seemingly, with its own satellite dish. These solo houses are spread out over several wide areas of the reservation. How, then, in these modern circumstances, will Shiwi'ma Bena:we be perpetuated?

voices

Paul Neha, cultural mentor

"Some old language that some people used to use, my grandma used to use, it’s no longer here. The reason the younger people are having a hard time understanding the prayer language is because it’s entirely different from the everyday language we use here; it’s old time language.

Then, too, awhile back we encouraged our people to pick up the English language, because with English language you can get a job anyplace—go off the reservation, get a job. You can know everything about Zuni language, but you can’t get a job on the outside because nobody will understand you.”
An Oral Tradition Accommodates the Written

Nurtured by a highly developed oral tradition containing a thousand years of knowledge, stories, beliefs, and histories, we Zuni did not find it necessary to invent our alphabet until thirty years ago. In order to create a written Shiwi’ma Benawe, a certain amount of standardization was required.

Our alphabet is phonetic, adopted from the English alphabet. However, there are eight English characters not included in the Zuni alphabet. They are: f, g, j, q, r, v, x, and z. New characters have been added as well: ch, ', : , k, l, ts. Two letters, p and t, can be found in the middle of a word but can never initiate a word. A glottal stop (') coupled with a ch, k, or ts is sometimes referred to as “popped,” as sound is forced by air built up at the back of the mouth. A glottal stop (') after a vowel shortens the duration of sound. A colon (:) is only used after a vowel and doubles the vowel’s sound in length. A glottal stop after a consonant, usually at the end of a syllable, abruptly stops the sound. The slash (/) sound is sometimes written lth, and the sound is produced by saying the l and th simultaneously. The tongue is pressed against the soft palate and air is directed on either side of it.

The structure of Shiwi’ma Benawe easily accommodates the invention of new words to describe new phenomena. By

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zuni Word</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Word Construction</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>benalashshi:we</td>
<td>bay-nah-lthash-she-way</td>
<td>bena:we (language, story) + lashshi:we (ancient)</td>
<td>ancient tales, historical accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ho’habonna</td>
<td>hoe-hä-bone-näh</td>
<td>ho’i (alive, people) + habonna (will gather)</td>
<td>audience or gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sonahchi</td>
<td>sown-ah-chee</td>
<td>son (we were [hons]) + ahchi (right? [hatchi?])</td>
<td>once upon a time (beginning of a fable or fictitious story; storyteller says, “We were. Right?” Audience answers, “Right!”)</td>
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combining or accenting root words in different ways and by adding prefixes and suffixes, a single new word can be made from many words, and this new word can be understood by any Zuni. This word construction also helps Zuni scholars understand ancient words such as the names of places and classifications of the natural world.

**Ancient History**

Traditional stories tell us that our ancient A:shiwi ancestors, the Ino:de:kwe, originated at the Grand Canyon and then migrated south and east, searching for the Middle Place, where they finally settled some 900 years ago in present day eastern Arizona and western New Mexico. While there must have been multilingual and multicultural environments in ancient A:shiwi communities, Shiwi'ma Benawe was always the dominant language of the A:shiwi. Through and with it, every component of the world was interpreted, understood, and conveyed. Through and with it, non-Zuni knowledge and activities were assimilated into the total context of A:shiwi culture.

The A:shiwi concept of spirituality, of self, of life, of survival was synonymous with place. Working in harmony with their semi-arid desert home, our A:shiwi ancestors developed successful agricultural methods based on a complex knowledge of their ecology. They constructed metaphorical language to communi-

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<thead>
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<td>le: semkon'kya</td>
<td>lay-sam-caw-nee-kya</td>
<td>le:wi' (this much) + sem (fable, half true story) + koni'kya (was short)</td>
<td>end of story (This is how short the story was. [for a tale of any length])</td>
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<tr>
<td>odin lana</td>
<td>oh-din-lthā-nāh</td>
<td>odinne (act of dancing) + lana (big in size, number)</td>
<td>climax in a dance or many groups of dancers</td>
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<tr>
<td>iho'iya:k'yanna</td>
<td>ee-hoe-ee-yāh-kgyān-nāh</td>
<td>iho (become person) + iya:k'yanna (become mature)</td>
<td>become a mature person</td>
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The Zuni Language—Shiwi’ma Bena:we, continued

cate this knowledge. For example, the word Nama:kwe translated literally means grandfathers. The Nama:kwe are the spirits of our early ancestors, who take the form of water to bless the crops and the parched land. Stories about the Nama:kwe taught the ancestors about rain—how to respect it, how to attract it, and how to make the most of it when it came.

Traditionally, Zuni language education occurred in the context of daily life. Children learned formally and informally by observing, listening, imitating, visualizing, memorizing, participating, repeating, and practicing. All knowledge and skills had immediate useful application and purpose. In most learning situations, people of all ages were involved, so children learned from several adults in one setting.

Recent History
In 1539-40, the A:shiwi first encountered Europeans in the persons of Father Marcos de Niza, his scout Estevan (an African slave), and Coronado and his Spanish army. Coronado was looking to strike it rich by looting the fabled Seven Cities of Gold, which Father Marcos reported that he had discovered. Coronado and his army arrived in Zuni expecting to be blinded by the glitter of gold; instead, they found seven pueblos constructed of stone and plastered with mud, the Seven Cities of Cibola. Deflated, they decided to claim all A:shiwi people and their land for Spain. For some unknown reason, the Spaniards began calling us Zuni. We named them in our language tsibolo:wa or Tsibolo:wa:kwe. This translates in English to tsiwe/body hair, bololo:we/bundle or roll of and kwe/people.

The Spaniards immediately began forcing the Catholic religion and education on the people, young and old, but this persecution was met with steadfast resistance. For example, in 1680 the A:shiwi and their neighboring Pueblo tribes staged a coordinated revolt in the Southwest, sending those Spaniards who were not killed packing for El Paso del Norte. The A:shiwi then moved atop Dowa Yalanne, Corn Mountain, and from this stronghold kept the Spanish army at bay for eleven years, until an uneasy peace was proclaimed.

After two hundred and eighty-two years of rule, the Spanish ceded Zuni to Mexico, and from 1821 to 1846, the Mexican government held political jurisdiction over our lands. During this brief period, there was minimal interference from Mexican bureaucrats, military, and priests, and the traditional ways of Zuni religion and education continued.

1846 to the present marks the period of United States
government influence and interference. For thirty years, from 1846 to 1876, the American government’s Indian Bureau delegated responsibility to and financially supported two Protestant religious groups to educate and Americanize the Zuni. Their assignment was to eradicate as much of the Zuni heritage as possible and to replace it with their European-derived culture and Christianity. Children were severely punished for speaking Shiwi’ma Bena:we at school. Protestant church officials and staff not only concerned themselves with the children’s education but also interfered with traditional religious activities. On several occasions, they called out the Tenth Calvary from Fort Wingate, New Mexico, in an attempt to stop traditional dances and other religious practices. By 1850, European-derived disease, diet, and alcohol had killed 90 percent of the Zuni people, leaving only about a thousand A:shiwi in the world.

From 1876 until 1956, the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs officially took over the responsibility for assimilating the Zuni, and of course the language of instruction continued to be solely English. But English was not the only European language we A:shiwi heard, especially during the 1800s, as many different European peoples came to Zuni for one reason or another. We called these visitors Lulu or Lulu:kwew because their speech sounded like the luluulululu, the sound of the housefly.

From 1956 to 1980, responsibility for educating Zuni children was passed to the state of New Mexico. In the beginning, the state continued the practices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. However, from 1968 to 1973, the state legislature passed laws to fund, develop, and implement bilingual education, and the federal government legislated discretionary programs and allocated funds to address the educational needs of minority language students. As a result, the Zuni culture gained some acceptability in the school environment. The gain was short-lived, however, as bilingual programs were curtailed when federal funding ended.

After much debate in the Zuni community and a referendum, the Zuni School District was created on July 1, 1980. Although we finally gained control of our public schools, many problems remain to be solved. Bilingual programs struggle to find footholds and have not been fully implemented at all grade levels. While some teachers accept bilingual education, few are trained in it, and bilingual educational materials are scarce.
Perpetuation

The Shiwi'Ma Bena:we, conclusion

The Shiwi Messenger, our community newspaper, periodically features articles written in Shiwi'Ma Bena:we, and the A:shiwi A:wan Museum and Heritage Center creates language exhibits. Over time, the community has recorded many elderly people to establish a resource of old spoken Shiwi'Ma Bena:we. Idiwanan An Chawe performs Zuni language plays on stage and radio. The Natural Resource Department and a number of related, culturally based conservation programs preserve some of the names of places and the agricultural and ecological language of our ancestors.

Religious efforts to perpetuate our language take place, as they always have, in the kivas and medicine societies and through the Rain Priesthood. Throughout the year, as part of a calendar of religious activities, such as night dances, rain dances, and Sha'łako, ancient prayers, epic poems, and chants are recited by young and old. The full embodiment of the Zuni language is present in these rituals; the words are sacred because they convey the cultural memory, the breath of the ancient ones.

It is this language that encapsulates the spirit of the people, connecting us to the knowledge that centers us, both individually and communally. It is this language that makes us A:shiwi.

Voices

Edward Wemytewa

"In the 1960s, many of the stories of our elders were collected. I remember one storyteller had filled twenty-five reel-to-reel tapes with stories. When we were creating the alphabet in the '70s, I went back to these stories. We also invited elderly people from the community to come and sit and help us clarify words and concepts. In the process, something unexpected happened—I started feeling more in touch with my soul and my spirit. It was not only because I was again writing and thinking in Zuni, it was because I was relating to our forefathers' philosophy—to what they felt, what they valued. And I was having to look at myself, because I talked about values, but didn't really follow the values. It felt like I was waking up after a long sleep."
The Appalachian Mountain region stretches from Maine to Georgia. It is an economically and culturally diverse territory with twenty-two million people. Roadside Theater’s home is in central Appalachia, where the 110-mile long Pine Mountain forms the spine of the densely forested Cumberland Plateau. Located in present day southwest Virginia, upper east Tennessee, eastern Kentucky, and southern West Virginia, where the four states back up on one another, the Cumberland Plateau was once hunting ground for the Cherokee and other Native tribes. The first Europeans to arrive on the Plateau were Scotch-Irish. They came to the frontier as much to escape their Old World nemesis, the English (who had already captured the continent’s eastern seaboard), as to satisfy their adventurous spirits.

From the beginning of the Scotch-Irish settlement on the Cumberland Plateau, there was intermarriage with Native Americans. In October, 1838, the Cherokee were rounded up by the United States Army for their final forced march west, “The Trail of Tears.” Some of those Cherokee sought to escape death by hiding in the mountains. Today, the majority of Appalachian families settling prior to 1900 on the Cumberland Plateau have Indian blood in their veins.

It was not until the 1890s that railroads and capitalism reached the Cumberlands. Businessmen from the east (and a few from Europe) came seeking their fortunes in the rich coal and timber fields in one of the oldest standing mountain ranges in the world. Some locals quickly bought into the outsiders’ program of progress with its new law and order, banks, and written contracts. Others saw the coming development as leading to the destruction of paradise and the end of a natural way of life. Now a hundred years later, corporations, including transnational corporations, are the absentee owners of 75 percent of central Appalachia’s land, its minerals, and its timber. Feeling little obligation to the region’s people, these absentee landlords have played a significant role in creating record levels of poverty on the Cumberland Plateau. To spite this economic hardship, mountain people continue to record their own

"The majority of mountain people are unprincipled ruffians. There are two remedies only: education or extermination. The moun­taineer, like the red Indian, must learn this lesson."

—New York Times editorial, 1912
version of history in an Appalachian oral tradition loaded with cultural memory.

The Great Smoky Mountains of western North Carolina mark an eastern boundary of Appalachia. Tony Earley, author of the next essay, was born and reared in the foothills of the Smokies where wages from factory work mirrored a coalminer’s payday on the Cumberland Plateau, and where hillside farmers could count on a few more acres to till than their counterparts to the west. The two places have been and remain at once different and similar in the Appalachian experience that they share.
The Appalachian Dialect
Guilt and the Past Participle: True Confessions from the Appalachian Diaspora

by Tony Earley

Although my wife, Sarah, and I grew up outside the same small town in western North Carolina and attended the same public schools, the differences in our backgrounds make our marriage a surprisingly cross-cultural institution. Simply put, Sarah’s grandfather owned a textile mill; mine owned a mule. That we grew up in largely different worlds was never more obvious than during our wedding, which we decided—for reasons that grow progressively more mystifying to us in retrospect—should be a full-blown, high church Episcopalian affair. Most of the guests on Sarah’s side of the church were lifelong Anglicans, while a high percentage on my side were country Baptists. The scene during communion couldn’t have been more chaotic if someone had yelled fire. I watched from the front of the church as my family and friends searched wild-eyed through the Book of Common Prayer for a clue as to what they were supposed to do. A longtime friend of mine wound up taking communion twice simply because she had no idea how to escape from the altar rail.

Although the years I spent in college and graduate school, as well as the upwardly mobile pretensions I acquired along the way, have erased most of the superficial social differences between Sarah and me, the subject of class comes up surprisingly often in our day-to-day lives, most often regarding the manner in which I speak when I’m not paying particular attention to the manner in which I speak. Like a lot of people of rural Appalachian descent, I tend to use the past-tense forms of irregular verbs in places where the past-participle form is called for by grammar books. For example, I’m more likely to say, “I could have wrote more,” than “I could have written more,” which happens to be correct. Class distinction, socio-economic disparity, and the cultural history of the Appalachian region become conversational topics whenever Sarah corrects me. I say, “I should have threw that away.” Sarah says, “Thrown.” I say, “Don’t tell me how to talk.” In our household, the sentence “I’m going to lay down and take me a nap” is as likely to lead to an impassioned recitation of how my grandfather had to turn to moonshining to feed his family during the Great Depression as it is to my ever getting to sleep.
What Sarah has made me aware of is that the tricky part about speaking in the Appalachian vernacular is that while it is at once a socio-cultural signifier that marks its speaker as one who shares in the indigenous history of a particular place, much of it also happens to be grammatically incorrect according to standard English usage. “Correct” and “incorrect” are, of course, artificial constructions and, like all rules, reflect either the will of a dominant power structure or the immense, grinding, more-or-less democratic weight of cultural consensus. That specific regional dialects have been, and will continue to be, marginalized by this process troubles me less than the fact that the Appalachian dialect has been somehow singled out by the greater culture that contains it as the official language of stupidity and ignorance. Indeed, the words “hillbilly” or “redneck” have become the last pejoratives denoting cultural or ethnic stereotypes that Americans can toss about without fear of being slapped with censure by an increasingly politically sensitive culture. As a reasonably well-educated professor of English I can say with almost certain surety that my occasional tendency to choose past-tense forms of irregular verbs when past-participle forms are called for, that my propensity for using “lay” when “lie” is appropriate, that my reflexive conversational fondness for the double negative, are symptomatic of neither ignorance nor stupidity, but rather emblematic of my membership in the cultural heritage of the Appalachians.

Still, because I theoretically know better, I can’t help but wonder if my choosing to use grammatically incorrect Appalachianisms on purpose would be as artificial as a self-conscious decision to use only proper English when speaking to people who share my social and regional background. All I can say for sure is that talking was a lot easier in the days before I understood the socio-cultural implications of the vernacular in which I naturally speak.

I visited Zuni Pueblo for the first, and so far only time, last December (2000), when Sarah and I spent a week driving around New Mexico. Although everyone we spoke to during our short time at Zuni was cordial to us, I don’t think I’ve ever been more conscious of my whiteness—or uncomfortable
because of it. I couldn’t get beyond the fact that we were white people who had traveled out of our way, at some expense, to basically gawk at people with skins darker than our own. Looking back, it seems to me that my discomfort resulted from two different types of guilt, neither of them particularly noble. The first was simply garden-variety, upper-middle class, liberal white guilt, which I used, in the standard manner, to flagellate myself just enough to make me feel better about my good fortune, but not so much that I would consider renouncing it. The second was a somewhat more complex variety, although that complexity does little to palliate either the guiltiness itself, or my inability to get over it or live with it constructively. I’m one of those people who started out poor, hated being poor, hated being looked down on by people who weren’t, strove consciously from early childhood on to escape both poverty and the anonymity that accompanies it, succeeded, then managed to make myself feel guilty about my success. In my case, as it often does, succeeding meant leaving—spiritually, intellectually, geographically. I joined the Episcopal church, the traditional faith of the southern upper class; I at least attempted to cull from my speech the old words and grammatical tics that gave away my rural Appalachian background; I left the part of North Carolina in which my family has lived for two hundred years, and which still is, ironically, the part of the world I love best. Do I wish that I had stayed home, stayed poor, and stayed anonymous? Of course not. Despite these manufactured existential crises, I like it out here. Yet, as with all departures, my leaving forged in me a series of regrets—most of them irrational—at abandoning the things I left behind. Whenever this particular species of guilt is strongest, I often notice—as I did that day in Zuni while ordering lunch—that my Appalachian accent grows noticeably more pronounced, that I seem to be offering ethnicity as a type of apology. It’s as if my subconscious is shouting out to anyone who will listen, “Please don’t hate me. I haven’t always been like this.”

In the Zuni museum, Sarah and I spent some time at a display of authentic Zuni handcrafts alongside fake Zuni handcrafts made in the Philippines. We couldn’t locate a key identifying which was which,
and Sarah and I, with our untrained eyes, often couldn't tell the difference. I feel that same kind of confusion when I think about the tenuous place Appalachian vernacular occupies inside the constantly evolving babble of standard American English. Even as I listen to it come out of my own mouth, it's increasingly hard for me to separate the authentic from the ersatz, the sincere from the ironic, the dancer from the dance. That's why—although as a general rule, I hate being corrected about anything—I'm always secretly pleased when I say, "I wish I'd've knew that sooner," and Sarah says, "Known." Because I don't think about it first, I know it's the real deal, that it's Appalachian and that it's old, and that, even as I strive to figure out how to live in this prefabricated future I've constructed for myself, I'm still linked through language, through the breath of speech, to what the novelist Willa Cather (a Virginian who wound up in New York by way of Nebraska and Pittsburgh) called in My Antonia, "the precious, the incommunicable past."
The Story of a Collaboration

by Dinah Zeiger

1969 Dudley Cocke and Edward Wemytewa meet on a basketball court.

1984 Roadside Theater informally visits Zuni Pueblo on the tail end of a tour of Utah. (Tommy Bledsoe and Ron Short are mistaken for members of Z Z Top.)

Edward Wemytewa

The collaboration between Roadside and Idiwanan An Chawe is a funny thing because it really started so long ago—thirty or so years ago, when Dudley first visited Zuni, and then Roadside started coming occasionally for performances. Back then I was working with the Zuni Language Curriculum project. We had just invented the Zuni alphabet and wanted to incorporate written Zuni into our public schools, but we didn’t have any Zuni language materials to use for that purpose. In 1981, I left to go off to college, and the Language Curriculum project remained dormant until about 1989, when I knew we had to do something about it. We had to make a giant step, and that’s when I saw Roadside Theater performing their stories in the classroom and on stage. I saw how they used their traditions in a new way, and I thought—we have to do something like that, something of that caliber, to make the community know that there were still efforts being made to preserve our spoken language and develop the written language.

Dudley Cocke

I first visited Zuni in 1969. I enjoyed the culture and community and the natural beauty, but I also saw the struggle of the Zuni people. It’s a lot like Appalachia. We’ve got a lot of the same troubles and a lot of the same joys, and that’s what drew us together. In sharing our troubles and joys we got connected to one another. You could say we’re both privileged, because we each have a sense of our history, of heritage, of being part of a special culture. We each have this historical sense of who we are based on our oral traditions.
The Story of a Collaboration, continued

1985 Roadside Theater performs in Zuni elementary and middle schools on the tail end of another western tour.

1986 Roadside Theater members climb Dowa Yalanne (Corn Mountain) with Edward Wemytewa and a group of middle school students.

Edward Wemytewa

Roadside had been visiting us for about a decade before we formalized a “Zuni theater troupe.” Roadside was doing a residency at the middle school, and I saw that their form of storytelling was similar to our traditional Zuni storytelling. But we had no resources, no pool of storytellers, so I started looking for ways to create a resource pool, and I started talking with Roadside about a collaboration. It was 1995, and Roadside got funds from the Rockefeller Foundation, and we decided to go ahead. I set up a public meeting in Zuni to talk about the collaboration and about fifteen people attended. Well, we invited them back for a second meeting, and nobody showed up! That’s when Arden and I knew that if we were going to make this happen, we’d have to do it ourselves. But to tell the truth, we didn’t even know what collaboration meant.

Arden Kucate

At first, we didn’t think it was going to fly. We were worried that the Zuni audience was used to the traditional form of storytelling and wouldn’t like seeing it in a more contemporary setting. We wanted to make the performance livelier, but we didn’t want to make it theatrical, with props and backdrops, so we retained the core of the traditional style, but we modified it.
1986–
1989 Roadside Theater visits Zuni several times performing in the schools. By ’89, most Zuni youth have seen Roadside perform.

1990 With support from a National Endowment for the Arts grant, Roadside conducts a two-week residency in Zuni, living with Zuni families, performing in the schools, and sharing the stage with Zuni storytellers, singers, and dancers. The residency coincides with Sha’lako, the big year-end religious celebration. (Donna thinks she learns how to make tamales.)

Edward Wemytewa
When no one showed up for that second meeting, Roadside didn’t let it drop. They said, “We’re going to go on with this plan to make a play together, and you guys will perform it with us on stage. We’ll have a formal script.” All I could think was, what kind of theater are you talking about?! Zunis don’t have theater. Then it dawned on me that we have all kinds of theater. I look in my backyard and we have the rain dances—we have the night dances. It’s a different kind of theater, but it’s a very rich theater. And then I started thinking about stories and storytelling. I grew up listening to stories and I admire storytellers—some of the materials I wrote for the Zuni Language Curriculum project came out of listening to storytellers. That’s when it came to me that our theater project with Roadside—our script—would be an extension of the traditional Zuni storyteller.

Donna Porterfield
One reason this collaboration worked was because of the amount of time over the years we’d spent sharing and learning about each other, not just with Edward but with a lot of other people in Zuni. We got to the point that we could laugh with and at each other—that made the process comfortable. I can’t understand all of Zuni culture, but there are some things that have to do with the heart and with feeling that I do understand. Another reason it worked was that the theme of the play—farming—was something we shared. The four of us who were responsible for writing the play are about the same age, and we had grown up in a time when farming was still an important part of life—a really important part of our background.
The Story of a Collaboration, continued

1991 Roadside Theater member Ron Short visits Zuni on his Harley. (He gets a big discount on jewelry at the Zuni Co-op.)

Edward Wemytewa
In our initial scripting meeting with Roadside we talked about differences and commonalities. How do we deal with differences? Does everything in the script have to be Native? What about language—English or Zuni? We were two diverse groups who knew enough about each other to know we wanted to work together, but no more. Over ten years we’d established some sort of familiarity, but we didn’t have a clue about how to proceed. It’s like you visit the library, and the librarian stacks a pile of books on the table and you need time to go through them before you know what you learned. At first, I didn’t know where to start, what to ask.

We started with a story circle in Kentucky. There are certain rules to a story circle—it has an agreed upon theme or topic that everyone sitting in the circle can choose either to speak about when it’s their turn or to pass, if they don’t have anything to contribute. It keeps going around that way until no one has anything more to say. It’s really a listening circle as much as it is a telling circle.

Arden Kucate
All I knew about Appalachia before this work was that’s where hillbillies came from. I’d never met anyone from there. Then we went there, and I visited Tommy Bledsoe way up in the hills. There’s another family that lives further up Tommy’s hollow, still living a very traditional life. We visited them, and it brought back a lot of good memories about growing up in the same way. But I wasn’t living that traditional life any more. These people were still living off the earth and making their own cottage cheese and milking the cow.
Edward Wemytewa
During the story circles we talked about ourselves, our experiences and what we hoped to get out of the project. In addition to the artists, there were Roadside administrative staff in the story circle, too. We didn’t know them, but since they’d be involved in the project it was important for us to know them. We shared some ideas there, and when we came back here, Arden and I started looking for resources, collecting stories, and thinking about singing. Our stories often have refrains that are sung, but music itself isn’t part of our storytelling tradition. We knew there was no way that Zuni was going to become Appalachia or the other way around. The whole point was to stay who we were and to use the cultural expressions that we knew.

Arden Kucate
When questions came up about what was appropriate, we worked around it by making sure that everyone—the cast and the core group—sat around the table, looked at the script and talked it out. Everyone was entitled to their own opinion, and that made us comfortable collaborating with another group. All those hours spent sitting around the table and discussing it—voicing our pros and cons—made it easier on stage, because we knew that we were in consensus.
1993 Summer: Edward Wemytewa and Arden Kucate visit Roadside’s home in Virginia and Kentucky to plan an exchange. (Arden, who has never seen a lightning bug, has a close encounter with a bunch of them attracted to the phosphorescent paint on his t-shirt.)

Edward Wemytewa

A big decision was whether the Zuni stories would be in Zuni or English. I decided the Zuni stories would all be in Zuni, which meant I had to summarize them for Ron and Donna, so they could begin to write a script that would link the stories together. The Zuni language is complex, and we wanted to make sure our partners and our audiences—both here in Zuni and elsewhere—understood. A lot of our own Zuni kids don’t understand the subtleties of their language. We needed a bilingual script—English was necessary for non-Zuni speakers and even for some who speak our language—to make sure everyone could understand the nuances of the Zuni stories. We want our language to continue to live and we want other responsible people in Zuni, in public positions, to use the language and maintain it at a high level.
Arden and I were trying to figure out what would interest our audience, which meant we had to think about who we were telling the stories to. I came up with this idea about farming because it’s an essential part of Zuni culture. It was the strength of the people who endured on this arid land. Why is corn so important? Why do we have rain dances? Farming stories helped me classify the Kachinas, the seeds. These stories helped me break down our social and religious structure and comprehend who we are.

Arden started sharing with me stories that had religious and philosophical connotations for Zuni. It was exciting to re-acquaint ourselves with storytelling. We familiarized ourselves with as many stories as we could find. One night, sitting with Arden, I started to summarize them, and the play’s story just flowed out. I didn’t really even know what I said, but in essence it was the spine of Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain. Later on we added Following the Seasons—winter, spring, summer, and fall. It came from just talking first. Once we had that spine, farming, it made us believe we could actually come up with something coherent.
The Story of a Collaboration, continued

1994 The Rockefeller Foundation gives money to support the new play collaboration.

1995 Spring: Dudley Cocke, Ron Short, and Donna Porterfield visit Zuni to work on the play. (All the collaborators get the flu.)

Edward Wemytewa
Putting the pieces together was something else. We didn’t even know what a formal script looked like. And then the Roadside folks started using theater terminology, and I said, “Wait a minute, you’re going to have to explain that.” And I had to push myself to actually write down the stories. We talked to Roadside on the phone a lot. Arden and I decided that we were just going to have to trust the professionals, so we left the script up to them. We sent Roadside what we had, and they put the stories together to create something new.

Arden Kucate
It was when Roadside added their part that the pieces fell into place. It took time to learn that new style, because traditional storytelling has no script and the storyteller just sits in one place. The script helped fit together two groups, put them in the same setting.
1995 Summer: Edward Wemytewa, Arden Kucate, and others visit Roadside to work on the play. (Everybody eats way too many "maters").

1995 Fall: Stories and songs are exchanged via mail.

**Donna Porterfield**

When it came to the writing, we'd mail our ideas and stories back and forth. One time Edward sent us some material and in it was a story about a bear. Ron and I looked at it, and we just said there isn't any way this story will fit. I put off calling Edward to tell him because I thought maybe he really liked this bear and really wanted it in the script. Then one day he called me and said, “You know, Arden and I have been thinking about that bear story and we don’t think it fits the script.” It just seemed like a lot of times it went that way, which was a good sign to me, because I was nervous about doing this in a way that would make sense and honor both traditions. So much damage has been done by outsiders meddling in each others’ cultures, and I knew from experience that things can happen in the heat of a collaboration.
1996 January: Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain: Following the Seasons script is assembled.

1996 February: Roadside travels to Zuni to rehearse and premiere Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain. (Roadside learns about Zuni time.)

Edward Wemytewa
Our stories speak of ancient values and how we see ourselves today. The script was organized around a variety of old and modern stories, with songs and dances woven in. The stories and dances in the play are different than our religious recitations and dances, but in the play we use them in much the same way—to give the audience a new experience, a chance to relax and reflect.

When the final script arrived, it was the first time I'd ever really seen one. We'd seen Shakespearean scripts in our school books—seeing something like that could scare anybody. So I was hesitant, but curious, too. I was kind of elated, to be honest, but then I wondered if we could pull it off.

Ron Short
I think music and dance are at the heart of the play. While the stories talk very directly about the two cultures, the songs and dances reveal the subtlety of cultural expression, the deep-felt expressions of self that have been defined and refined through many generations. In both communities that learning process has happened in the same way—singers have taught singers, dancers have taught dancers. Across the generations the identity of the culture has passed internally through the people.

Dudley Cocke
I see a fair amount of professional theater, and if I look at the singing and dancing and costumes in Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain in theatrical terms, it's magnificent. It's grander than Broadway. But I think at times it is hard to recognize the richness that is around us until we get a little distance.
Edward Wemytewa

At first all I wanted to do was write it, then get somebody else up there on stage to perform it. Somebody articulate, with a pleasant voice who can actually sing. Not me; I don't even sing in the shower. My role was to provide the information for the stories. I wanted to make sure that as a tribe, as a person involved in the language, we had a product that the community could use. But as the project went on, no lead person appeared to take it on stage, and that's how I ended up there. I wanted our language to be demonstrated in public. Our traditional storytellers used to do this, but they had disappeared. So, looking at the Roadside model, I thought it was the best alternative. And I wanted it to succeed.

Arden Kucate

It was a challenge because rather than reciting things you knew from within, you had a script to memorize. That was a significant change. It involved hours of trying to learn it, and a lot of times it was frustrating. We had to learn how to synchronize with another group so the stories would flow freely rather than cutting abruptly from one to the other. We had to streamline the transitions. That's when we added the dances to give us a little time to re-group and get ready for the next story. It took time, and we were all new to it, so we had to rely on one another, to coach each other all the way through.
The Story of a Collaboration, continued

1996–2000 Corn
Mountain/Pine
Mountain goes on tour.
Cast size varies from
eleven to twenty-two
according
to the
number
of young
dancers.

Edward Wymetewa
We had a week of rehearsals with Roadside before the
first performance, to work out transitions and choreog-
raphy. Dudley was the director, but we’d all get
involved in trying to stage it. Then it would get chaotic
and he’d take control again because there were too
many directors. Finally he and Arden put it together.
Arden’s been dancing all his life and knows the tradi-
tional ways and how things should be done. They
worked out what the performance should look like.

Coming from a very close community, one of
our big fears was that we might be laughed at, that
people would be rude. The first performance, we
came out on stage with withdrawn faces. I mean we
were nervous. I would be looking at Arden and his foot
would be tapping and his hands would be in his
pockets, and I said to myself, “He’s doing the worst,
the things that we are not supposed to do,” and after a
while, I would be tapping my foot, too. And again, we
weren’t sure if we were connecting with the audience.
But I think one of the things the people in Zuni saw
and began to believe was that a Zuni can stand up there
and talk fluently in our native language.

Ron Short
I don’t think they (Edward, Arden, and
Dinanda) recognized that they were the
pros when it came to being Zuni story-
tellers. When they came to Kentucky,
people were dazzled by the costumes, the
sound of the language. That had never
happened before, to them or to us. People
in Kentucky came to see Roadside in a
different way because we were standing
beside the Zuni on that stage.
Ron Short
From the beginning Edward and Arden insisted that young people be involved, that it would not be just older people performing. There had to be a way for young people to participate who didn’t have time to learn the script. At first it was a concern but it became one of the better things about the collaboration, being able to have six or sixteen dancers. That’s part of Zuni culture.

Dudley Cocke
We were performing once at D. Y. Elementary School and we had maybe eight young dancers in the show. But word got around that it was alright to join, so the next night we had maybe seventeen who wanted to dance. I was backstage, and every time their cue came, the kids would line up, and as they hit the stage, they’d take off their glasses—most Zunis wear glasses. By the time everyone got on stage, I had glasses coming out of every pocket.
The collaboration and performance made us come out of our shell. We’d traveled and done cultural exchanges before this collaboration, but we still had this “stoic Indian” kind of expression. But we got over it—sometimes by making faces at Dudley. Suddenly we had to be aware of where we were on stage in relation to everyone else; it was all so new. We stumbled many times, but we were, as Ron says, “getting growed.”

Now we’re at the point where we get stronger when we’re up there on stage. Even if your spirit isn’t right, you’re empowered the more you’re up there. And so sometimes if you start speaking and you are self-conscious, you just jump into the story. The story is important, so you just make yourself insignificant and the story significant, and that is what it becomes, and that is what it is about. And so this work has actually helped me hang onto a lot of other things in my life.

Dinanda Laconsello
I saw Roadside perform at the middle school where I work, and I fell in love with their stories. So when Edward approached me to become part of the cast, I decided to take a risk. I really didn’t grow up hearing stories. My time and age was with the TV and electricity being here, so I think that was the reason I had a strong belief in becoming a storyteller and just being able to learn.

Donna Porterfield
You know, at Roadside we want audiences who are participants, not just spectators. We want to have a real exchange, and that just can’t happen without a lot of audience engagement work, starting on the front end of it all and following it out. So I think we spent as much time building an audience as developing the play.
Edward Wemytewa

I think the reason why our stories work and why as storytellers we’ve continued to tell them is because we realized we weren’t only creating a story but an audience, too. We were training ourselves and our audiences. It wasn’t just going up on the stage but into the classroom, out in the community.

*Children Who Made Dragonfly* is a story in one of our later plays, and at the end of the performance we passed out cornstalk dragonflies that we made for the children in the audience. But it was the old people—the grandmothers—who said, “I didn’t get one, give me one.” They reached out for this cornstalk dragonfly, and they inhaled its spirit. We believe that everything we make is a part of us, therefore it is alive. By inhaling the spirit, the grandmas were blessing and welcoming the new life that we had made. Everyone felt this was a very warm ending to the performance, an ending we could not have scripted.

Kim Neal Cole

I didn’t really know much about Zuni, and when I got there I realized their stories were like our front porch stories, not separate from everyday life. I would sit in Edward’s mother’s house and watch Mudheads (sacred clowns) pass by outside; that’s when you know you are in it. You are there, and it is going on all around you.
Edward Wemytewa

We learned a lot from working with Roadside, and they learned from us—we found a lot of things we share. And the Zuni community found out how much they are interested in other cultures. You can’t predict a product, but when it’s finished, it’s special because, through the process, you’ve grown, you’ve pushed yourself and learned.

Ron Short

Responses from our home audiences have been better than responses elsewhere. Most people not connected to Zuni or Appalachia are faced with two unknown cultures. And people who are used to other kinds of theater often don’t know what to make of what’s happening—with performers coming on dancing in an extraordinary way and more than one storyline and language. Nothing about it fits the stereotype.
Dudley Cocke
It's true. The performers are not taking on Appalachian and Zuni roles—they are Appalachian and Zuni people. They embody their culture, and this gives the performance a ritualistic cast. This can disorient audiences.

Ron Short
Some audiences decide the play is an intellectual test. Others try to see it as pure song and dance. Either way, they simply don't have enough context to understand it as a gift, which is how our Zuni and Appalachian audiences see it. If theater is a place where we enact who we are, the question becomes: How much do you simplify yourself and your culture in order to entertain people? How much can you give up and still hold onto yourself?

Anne Beckett conducted the extensive interviews upon which this story is based.
A Note About the Play and Its Translation

The place and time of Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain is the here and now. The players are six storytellers, who are on the stage at all times, and anywhere from five to sixteen Zuni dancers and singers who enter and exit. Elaborate, traditional Zuni dance regalia is worn in all performances. The scenic and lighting designs vary according to venue: from the simple for a community center to the complex for a large auditorium. Consistent design elements include several roughly hewn wooden benches, Appalachian quilts, Zuni blankets, and different lighting for the play’s various performance components—storytelling, singing, oral history narration, and dance.

It may help the reader imagine the play to know that it is performed in a mix of English and Zuni, and that the ratio of English to Zuni varies in a performance depending on the audience. For non-Zuni audiences, the Zuni stories are often told in a combination of Zuni and English. The Appalachian parts are in English regardless of who is in the audience.

Wilfred Eriacho, Sr. and Edward Wemytewa are responsible for the Zuni language. Both were instrumental in the creation of the Zuni alphabet in the 1970s. Half jokingly, they attributed any difference of opinion about spelling or sentence construction to their growing up in the pueblo on opposite sides of the Zuni River. The Zuni River (now a dry ditch) is twenty yards wide.

As for the Zuni to English translation, Dudley Cocke and Edward Wemytewa have tried to capture some of the subtlety of the Zuni language without resulting in stilted English. The word *iho:iya:k'yanna* illustrates the translators’ difficulty: *iho* means to become a person and *iya:k'yanna*, to become mature. This construction indicates that first one must become a human being before thinking about maturing.

While important that Zuni be translated into English, it is urgent that all Zunis begin writing in their mother tongue, for it is the *Shiwi'ma Bena*:we morphology that can best connect the *A:shiwi* past to the present.
Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain
Following the Seasons
Dowa Yalanne/Ashek'ya Yalanne
Debikwayinan Idulohha

written by
Arden Kucate & Edward Wemytewa of Idiwanan An Chawe
and
Donna Porterfield & Ron Short of Roadside Theater

original music by Ron Short
choreographed by Arden Kucate
directed by Dudley Cocke

Cast
Idiwanan An Chawe
Arden Kucate
Dinanda Laconsello
Edward Wemytewa

Roadside Theater
Tommy Bledsoe
Kim Neal Cole
Ron Short

and five to sixteen dancers and singers. Regulars have included:
Christopher Edaakie, Francis Leekya, Jr., Jarvette Chopito, Vanita Besselente,
Kirk Romanito, Ivanna Romanito, Jerold Waikaniwa, Susan Mahooty,
Vaughn Awelagte, Keith Edaakie, Loren Ukestine, Ethan Wemytewa,
Elgin Hechiley, Charlene Hechiley, Demetrius Pinto, Kassie Kucate, Carleen Hustito,
Kayla Eriacho, Garrett Edaakie, John Nitha
Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain: Following the Seasons

Entrance
(Zuni singers enter stage right, singing. Roadside then joins from stage left, and the two songs merge and become one.)

Kumanchi A:wan A:nakya (song)
Ya’ e…ya’ene:ya.
A:yo:...o:... hayowa: tsine:....
A:yo:...o:... hayowa: tsine:....
A:yo:...o:...
Kuchimiya:...lu:... ahe:...ne:...ya.
Ya:he:lo.

Wings to Fly (song)
One day the Lord will come,
And give me wings to fly
Then my heart will soar,
And carry me over the mountains.

Kim
There are some who say the world is a machine.

Arden
Hame’ a:benan, ulohnan ma:kinanne le’dikwe’a.

Ron
There are some who say it is only a willer-the-wisp of our imagination.

Edward
Hame’ a:benan, domt yanli’dohan ikna’ ho’n a:wan ettsa’akyatchoy’a.

Dinanda & Kim (together)
There are some who call it Mother.
Da: hame’ Tsitda le’andikwe’a.

Ukkwadonna
(Ashiwi denene:kw idokkwakwi ukkwado, denayna:wa.
Roadside weshikk’yakwin ukkwadonan iwoslik’yanna, la’ls deyna: thabonna, dobinde yo’ana.)

Kumanchi A:wan A:nakya (denanne)
Ya’ e…ya’ene:ya.
A:yo:...o:... hayowa: tsine:....
A:yo:...o:... hayowa: tsine:....
A:yo:...o:...
Kuchimiya:...lu:... ahe:...ne:...ya.
Ya:he:lo.

La’hinakya Ebisse:we (denanne)
Kya:k’i’ ho’n a:wonak‘i’ iyan, hom ladenna
Les’hap, hom ik’enan ikeyado:nan, Lahn hol adela:wa’kowa’ yadelan allunna.

Kim
There are some who say the world is a machine.

Arden
Hame’ a:benan, ulohnan ma:kinanne le’dikwe’a.

Ron
There are some who say it is only a willer-the-wisp of our imagination.

Edward
Hame’ a:benan, domt yanli’dohan ikna’ ho’n a:wan ettsa’akyatchoy’a.

Dinanda & Kim (ichabona)
There are some who call it Mother.
Da: hame’ Tsitda le’andikwe’a.

Journeys Home
Ron
We make the earth by walking upon it.

Edward
We name the earth by talking.

Tommy
We celebrate the earth by dancing.

Arden
We honor the earth by singing.

All
Homeward Now (song)
Homeward now, shall I journey,
Homeward upon the rainbow.
Homeward now, shall I journey,
Homeward upon the rainbow.
To life unending and beyond it,
Yea, homeward now shall I journey.
To joy unchanging and beyond it,
Yea, homeward now shall I journey.

Edward
Good evening and welcome. My name is Edward Wemytewa.

Arden
This is Dinanda Laconsello.

Dinanda
La:l uhsi Arden Kucate (K'u:k'ahdi).
Edward
We are Idiwanan An Chawe, the Children of the Middle Place. Many years ago, when I was a teenager, I met Dudley Cocke, and over the years we have become friends. He introduced me to these friends from Roadside Theater, and they have been visiting Zuni for fifteen years, telling their stories and singing their songs. And we have been to Kentucky telling Zuni stories and dancing. Tonight, that's what we're going to do here together.

Kim
Keshshi. Ho' Kim Neal le'shina. Edward taught me that, but I guess I better speak Mountain instead. Hello, my name is Kim Neal. This is Tommy Bledsoe and Ron Short, and we are part of Roadside Theater from Whitesburg, Kentucky. And we're very happy and excited to be here in Zuni.

Dinanda
You might be wondering what we're doing here on this stage together.

Arden
Yeah, I've started to wonder that myself.

Ron
A few years ago, I met a German lady in Canyon de Chelly and I told her I was headed for Zuni . . .

Arden (as German Lady)
"Oh no, liebchen, don't go there. I have just come from Zuni and there is nothing there but dust and dogs, dust and dogs!"

Edward

Kim

Dinanda
Ko'ch imat ley'ap ist don i:willaba' luwayaldoye, honk'wat don le'n ho' itse'ima.

Arden

Ron
Ma's koswi' hol debikwayi kesi. Les ana' Canyon de Chelly'an ho' Chemakw okyattsik ashshu'wan ho' yam Shiwinakwin an'ona ho' adinekke:ya . . .

Arden (Chemakw Okyattsik yashna)
"Dishshomahha holo, hom cha'le, el do' isk'on a:namdu. Ho' chim Shiwinakwin iya. Ist'kon kwa' kwa'hol de'amme, domt luho: dap wattsida, luho: dap wattsida!"
But, strange as it may seem, there’s something about Zuni that feels like home to us. Hillbillies and Zunis are a lot alike.

Me and Edward was talking about how we grewed up and we both agreed that the best six years of our life were spent in first grade.

You heard about Zuni time? We show up an hour late. Them hillbillies show up three days late!

Yeah, even their luggage was four days late.

Some folks say that hillbillies and Zunis both talk funny.

We don’t ta’ like dat.

They call tomatoes “’maters.”

You all call mothers “mudders.”

“’taters”

Edward

Ashiwi elt’hol a:shimina.

Edward


Edward


Edward

We don’t ta’ like dat.

Arden

Yam tomatoes, “’maters” le’a:wandikwe’a.

Tommy

Don yam a:tsitda, “mudders” le’a:wandikwe’a.

Arden

(Yam k’yabi mowe) “’taters”

Kim


Tommy

Edwardkwin hon yam ko’hol leya’ ko’ leyhol iho’iyak’e:kkowa hon beye:nan, hon habona’ tse’map edwi:kk’ya debikwayina:aw de’chi hish aiwallikowa’ hon.

Edward & Tommy

firsh grade grade’an an utchu’kya.

Edward


Dinanda


Tommy


Edward

We don’t ta’ like dat.

Arden

Yam tomatoes, “’maters” le’a:wandikwe’a.

Tommy

Don yam a:tsitda, “mudders” le’a:wandikwe’a.

Arden

(Yam k’yabi mowe) “’taters”

Revealing a Zuni—Appalachia Collaboration
Tommy
"brudders"

Dinanda
Enough of this! So here we are together, fixin’ to tell stories, sing songs.

Kim
Now, we know that our stories are different.

Dinanda
Our songs are different.

Edward
Our language too.

Ron
Yes, our songs and language are different.

Arden
But we know the same rain falls in Kentucky.

Kim
The same sun raises its head ever’ day over Zuni.

Edward
And every night the moon shines.

Dinanda
We grow corn and beans.

Tommy
We grow beans and corn.

Arden
We plant by the signs

All
and follow the seasons.
In ancient time, there lived a people in the Middle Place. The valley was surrounded by many villages near and far. It was a time when the earth was moist and fertile. The old ones, feeble as they were, and the young ones too, they all had in their minds and hearts the devotion to raise crops. Their existence depended upon the blessings of the seed family which was rooted in the culture since the Time of the Beginning, when the people had emerged from the womb of the Mother Earth. Eagerly everyone anticipated the planting season. Spring would come to them.

Before the planting was done, in preparation, the people of the Middle Place ventured out. To the north towards Twin Buttes and Blue Bird mesas they went, looking for places where there were heavy silt deposits built by flash floods coming down from the canyons. Others would head out west to K'ya'na; still others to the south, Heyalo:kwi, the Place of Silt. The remainder of the people would seek lands to the east around Doy'a. These places of moist and fertile beds would be investigated, and all would eagerly await the planting.

When the time came, grains from the seed family would be planted, and during the sprouting, when the people, young and old, saw the wakening of the plants, their spirits lifted.
Dinanda
As the corn, squash, melons, and all other seed varieties grew, each day they received encouragement. Thus, upon reaching a farming plot, one would greet, “a:wanikina:wa,” and talk to the plants, the children. It was like that.

Ron, Tommy, & Kim
Following the Seasons (song)
The sun rises yellow in the eastern sky,
The northern light shines a ghostly white,
Southern skies burn red and bright,
As day slips into blue, black night.

And this old world keeps spinning round,
Sometimes up, sometimes down,
Summer, winter, spring, and fall
Following the seasons.

You drop four grains into each hole,
One for the squirrels and one for the crows,
One for the ground and one to grow,
`Til it’s time for eating.

And this old world keeps spinning round,
Sometimes up, sometimes down,
Summer, winter, spring, and fall
Following the seasons.
There was a time, back in the old country, when people lived in tribes. There were Angles and Celts, Gaels and Picts. The tribes were always fighting. Always looking for more land to live on. Always in search of a new home.

There’s a story they tell about that time when there was a boat wreck and ever’body on it was drowned except one man.

This feller was lost and gave up any idea of ever findin’ his way back to his people. He’d been months and weeks all by hisself. He come upon a deer, killed it. He’s awful hungry. He looked around fer some place to build a fire and cook it, and find him some shelter, you see. He seen a cave not too far off, and he drug the deer over to it.

The entrance to that cave was all wore slick like somebody or something had gone in and out of it regular-like.


Les a:na’ delapnanne yokona’ benan, imat k’yayanalluk’yanakya wakkwadop, elthol ansam upbo’kona’ awakkwadopde, dobinde lashshik anillikya.


ATosht’an, onan kwadon’an, hish kyalolonne, chuw holi

Kahch’at kwa’holt

Lubidenna kwadelnan, kwayilekkona’ ikna’kya.
The man, he took some notice of this, but he didn't pay too much notice, 'cause he was plumb wore out from luggin’ that deer around, so he just went on in.

Got him some sticks and got a fire started and commenced to broil that deer.

It was just about done, and all of a sudden right behind him he heared a great big growl.

Now let me tell you that feller was scared. That woman must a-been seven or eight foot tall, and she’s a-standin’ there with a deer throwed over her shoulder.
Kim
She just stood there and looked at that man and
looked at that fire. I don't reckon she'd ever seen a fire
before . . . or a white man neither!

Ron
Well that man, he didn't know what to do. So he just
reached over, pulled off a deer leg, and reached it up to
that hairy woman.

Kim
She hesitated for a little, sniffed at it, took a bite out of
it, and then she gobbled that whole thing up in one bite.

Tommy
Then she tore a haunch off that deer she was carryin'
and reached it over to the man to cook it.

Ron
Just as the white man was a-startin' to put it on the fire,
he heared another growl,

Tommy (as Hairy Man)
a long, low growl.

Kim
Looked up and there stood the hairy man!

Ron
He knowed he was a goner fer sure!

Kim (as Hairy Woman)
But the hairy woman jumped on the hairy man and they
fit and rolled over and over and fit. 'Til finally, the hairy
woman killed the hairy man.
Ron
So that feller, he just stayed on there at the cave. Finally, he just took up with the hairy woman, lived with her you know. When she’d go out a-huntin’, she’d carry him out with her and set him on a log while she kilt the game and drug it back to the cave. He stayed there fer three years, and the hairy woman

Kim
she had a baby.

Ron
That feller, he’d stay at the cave and mind the baby. He was a-teachin’ the baby and the hairy woman to speak his own language.

Tommy
Then one day five years from the time he’d got lost, while the hairy woman was out huntin’, some people from his own country found him.

Ron
He knowed this was his only chance to get back to his own people, and he wanted to take his baby with him,

Tommy
but them fellers told him

Tommy & Kim (as Fellers)
“NO!”

Kim
“A half hairy baby would never make it in our country.”

Ron
Akkya uhsona' tsawak dey'ona doms a'losh't'an deya'kya. Doms okya' uhebalan illi' ideya:kya, den'at lesna, don ayyu'ya:naba. Okya' 'ada'kyan a:nan, yam ottsi sedo' kwayi:man, hol k'ummannan animyal:donan, kwa'hol wowe' laknan, doms yam a'loshdekwin a:welahan a:nuwa. Lukk'on ottsi' ha' debikwayino de'chi isk'on hol okyatt:si uhebalan illi' deya'kya

Kim
okya' chawashkya.

Ron
Tsawak a'losh't'an chi imon, wiha ts'a:na' ayyubatch'ap, dachsen okya' kwa'hol demla kyashima wowe la:dekkya. Tsawak yam be'nwa a:chiya annik'ekkya.

Tommy

Ron
Ottsi' ayyu'ya:na'kya, hish i:nadin'amme' yam a:ho'i a:deyakwin aksh a:nuwa. La: yam wiha ts'an il a:n iyahkya,

Tommy
lesni:apde a:wotti: a:wi:ykowa' le:shandikwekkya

Tommy & Kim (A:tsawak yashna)
“HOLO!”

Kim
“Lesna' wiha ts'a:na' i:bachina' uhebalan deyan, kwa' ho'n a:wan ulo:hn'an ele dey'shukwa.”

Journeys Home
Ron
He begged them to let him take the baby.

Tommy & Kim
but they wouldn't hear of it.

Ron
So they started out and got down to the boat. And as they’s a-shovin’ off, they heared a growl.

Tommy
They looked up

Kim (as Hairy Woman)
and seed the hairy woman a-runnin’ towards them with her baby in her arms.

Ron
She waded in a-screamin’, but the water got too swift and deep and she couldn’t go no further.

Kim
She looked out towards that boat as it was leavin’, and held that baby up over her head

Tommy
like she was a-sayin’ fer him not to leave

Kim
“on account of the baby.”

Ron (as Man)
That man, he was a-cryin’ and a-motioning her to go back. Said he had to go . . .
Kim
Then she let out a great big growl and tore that baby clean in two

Tommy
and flung one half out to the desertin’ man in the boat

Kim
and a-huggin’ the half what looked like her, turned away and walked back to the cave.

Turkey Dance
(Rattle shakes off stage. Turkey dancers and singers enter. The turkey is an important bird to the people. Its pelt is a prize to the kiva groups. The fast beat forces the dancers to pick up their heels, as they imitate the movements of the bird.)

(Turkey dancers exit.)

Rules of Zuni Storytelling
Edward
These are the Zuni storytelling rules. One, you want to make it easy for the storytellers. The encourager is “E:so.” Let’s try it: “E:so.” An appreciative audience may be rewarded with additional stories.

Dinanda
Rule two, when the story ends with “Le:’semkon’kya,” you stretch like this to avoid becoming a hunchback in your young age. “Le:’semkon’kya.”
There was a time in the valley called the Middle Place. The valley was surrounded by many little villages—Hambassaw'aw, Place of the Herbs; Binna:wa, Place of the Winds. One of the villages was called Mats'a:kya, where there lived a girl who raised and herded a flock of turkeys. Black turkeys.

Each day at sunup she went out of her small adobe home and released her children, the turkeys, from their pen. Then they would wander the valley heading south along the base of Dowa Yalanne mesa on to their feeding grounds. At noon they always worked their way around to the southern end of the mesa where there was a spring, Kyakirm'a, a fresh water seep. The turkeys always enjoyed a drink of water during the heat of the day. Then her children would bed down to save themselves from the sun.

Late in the afternoon, the turkeys, accompanied by their mother, the girl, would resume their feeding around the foothills of the mesa as they headed back to their village of Mats'a:kya. By dusk, they would reach their pen and be let in to roost for the night. The girl would go into her adobe house, eat, and sleep. This would be another completed day, a day like any other.
Edward
One morning, as the girl was releasing her children from the pen, something unusual happened. At the main village of Halona:wa, the Sun Priest was summoning the villagers for a Ya:ya Dance to take place within four days. When the young girl heard the news, she became very excited.

Dinanda (as Turkey Girl)
“Oh! Perhaps I will dance! But first, I will ask my turkeys.”

Edward
Because this would mean leaving her children for a day.

Arden
That morning, as usual, the girl and her flock continued to wander toward the south, where they would rest at the seep. All the while the girl thought of how she was going to ask the turkeys. The flock arrived at the spring and drank, followed by bedding down, as usual. There she decided to ask.

Dinanda
“Children, in four days there will be a Ya:ya Dance at the main village, and I want to go. I am looking forward to this, but you have to make the decision with me. You don’t have to give me an answer right now, but this is to let you know what I am thinking. You will tell me tonight. I hope you will allow me to go.”

Arden
By mid-afternoon, when the ground cooled off some, the turkeys left their bedding grounds and started to forage for seeds and fresh grass, all the time heading north back towards Mats’akya.

Edward

Dinanda (Dona E’lashdok yashna)
“Oh! Hinik ho’ odak’yanna! Lesnande wa’ yam dona kela yayyalak’yanna.”

Edward
Leha’ba yam dobinde yadon chawe a:ya’k’yanahanna.

Arden
Lehap shamle e’lashdok yam dona awilli’ ma’k’ya’k’yanahanna. Awil idullapkya, ik’ya’k’yanahanna, iyude’chimah napdun’on akkya. Awan tsita’ da:chi yam yala’dun’ona tse’mekkya. Ik’ya’k’yanahanna a:de’chimah, dudun’an, iwo’yo’kya. Is’k’on okya yalak’.kya.

Dinanda

Arden
Ashe: yasselak’ya, wets’i’ aweklan its’edip, dona yam iwo’yo’k’ya’itsés dip bek’ya’u ya:du. Bishlankwin dahna’s Mats’ak’ya’k’yanahanna awa:kiya.
Edward
The flock arrived at their pen, anxious to inform the girl of their decision. They settled in the pen as the girl came over to meet with them.

Dinanda
“Now, my children, what have you decided?”

Edward (as Turkey)
“Yes, our mother, we want you to enjoy yourself at the Circle Dance. You better go, for you have not visited your parents or friends in some time! However, you must keep in mind one very important thing, and that is to come back to us, your children, as soon as the sun falls low to the west. Can you promise us that?”

Dinanda
“Yes. I promise, my children.”

Arden
Before she went back into her house, the flock told her that they had noticed her scratching her head all day long.

Edward
“Please sit down and bend over. It seems you have lice.”

Arden
As soon as the girl bent over, the turkeys started pecking away at her scalp.

Arden & Edward (as Turkeys)
“Snap, snap, snap…” they rid her of the lice.

Arden (as Turkey)
“Now go in and wash your hair.”
Edward
The girl poured water into an old, traditional pottery bowl, and using a yucca root made a soapy lather. Now her long, black hair was very clean and shiny. Her turkeys remarked how pretty she was. They were happy for her.

Dinanda
“Oh, I have nothing to wear. I want to dance, but . . .”

Arden
Her children told her not to worry, to sit and wait.

Edward
The turkeys went off in every direction. Being supernatural creatures, they were prepared to meet the needs of their mother.

Arden
Directly, one of the big turkeys brought white buckskin moccasins and white buckskin wrappings for the leggings. Next, a large hen came in with a black robe-like manta dress, which would be draped around one shoulder of the girl, and a sash. Right behind her were two chicks dragging a white cape with red and black stripes. Last, necklaces—strands of turquoise and white shell beads—were brought by more turkeys. The girl was ready for the dance.

Edward
That night she was so excited it was hard for her to sleep.

Arden
Early the next morning, she let her turkeys out.
Dinanda
“Children, today you will be out by yourself. Please don’t stray off our usual way. I wouldn’t want anything to harm you. I will return before sunset. I won’t forget you.”

Arden
Once the turkey flock left, the girl ran inside her hut to prepare.

Edward
She was ready in a jiffy. Turkey Girl was indeed beautiful! She started to walk to the village, only to find that she couldn’t stop walking faster and faster. Soon she was running.

Arden
An alley in the main village led the girl to the central plaza where already, even in the early morning, it was crowded. The houses were stacked, some more than four stories high, all made of stone and mud bricks.

Edward
The dancing took place all day. Dance groups came and went after two or three songs.

Arden
Little boys and girls, teenagers, adults, and even elderly were dancing the Yaya. The men folk were partially naked around the torso and wore buckskin moccasins, ceremonial kilts, beaded necklaces, and colorful head-dresses. They were handsome.
The women were just as colorful in their buckskin moccasins, manta dresses, sashes, and colorful turquoise and shell necklaces. Contrasting with their long, black hair were multi-colored parrot feathers and yarn and bright ribbons in forms of huge blossoms. They were beautiful.

Amidst all the dancers was Turkey Girl, dancing hard and enjoying every moment of it. Her girlfriends were right beside her. But not for long, for soon the continuous dancing had taken the wind out of them. Not the Turkey Girl! She was lost in the rhythms.

By mid-afternoon, the flock of turkeys had worked their way back to Mats'a:kya, where they waited for their mother. There was no sign of her.

Not a sight. One of the older turkeys said to a pair of chicks...

“Don’t worry. Call out to her—perhaps she will come.”

The chicks sounded off:

Arden
Now anxious, the turkeys decided to move towards Halona:wa in hopes of meeting their mother.

Dinanda
Their mother didn’t come.

Edward
Back in the swirling dance, Turkey Girl was oblivious to the world, until something distracted her. Up on one of the highest rooftop was a solitary figure. The Turkey Girl called her girlfriends.

Dinanda
“Who is that young man? I want to dance with him!”

Edward (as Girlfriend)
“He is a son of a Rain Priest. He rarely comes out. He is very shy.”

Dinanda
“Call him down for me. I will dance with him.”

Arden
Soon the Rain Priest’s son was dancing right beside the Turkey Girl. Now the spectators filled the sides of the plaza and the surrounding rooftop.

Edward
As the dancing had tired the girls earlier, now the priest’s son, too, felt the exhaustion from the unending exertion. He wanted to rest, but the Turkey Girl insisted on one more, then another.
The turkeys had now moved to the outskirts of Halona:wa. They could hear the singing. For the second time, the chicks called out to their mother.

**Dinanda, Arden, & Edward**


**Edward**

They looked, but saw no one. Now the sun had fallen out of the sky, except for a sliver of light, the glow from the sun’s crown.

**Arden**

The old turkey spoke angrily,

**Edward** *(as Turkey)*

"Let’s go. Obviously our mother is not thinking about us. We will not go back to our home at Mats’a:kyakwin. We will go towards the south, to those mesas and canyons across from Dowa Yalanne.”

**Arden**

The flock moved quickly and deliberately away from Halona:wa. For the third time the chicks called out,

**Dinanda, Arden, & Edward**


**Arden**


**Dinanda, Arden, & Edward**


**Edward**


**Arden**

Isk’on hols dona lana’ ikyadikya,

**Edward** *(Dona yashina)*


**Arden**


**Dinanda, Arden, & Edward**

Edward

The plaza was roaring with songs from many dance groups. Each seemed to be trying to out sing the other. It was the grand finale. Turkey Girl and the Rain Priest’s son were hard at it, following a line of other dancers, working their way around the huge crowd. Then, suddenly, the Turkey Girl stopped, as if she had fallen into a trance.

Dinanda

“Hi:ya, my children!”

Arden

She ran out of the plaza, racing toward her turkeys.

Dinanda

“Wait, wait, my children!” The turkeys moved on as though they did not hear her.

Arden

Now Turkey Girl was losing ground because of all the weight she was carrying. First she dropped her cape, then she removed her necklaces. The sashes around her waist fell off. The leggings had to be gotten rid of. Finally, the manta dress had to be taken off. Now the girl was running freely after her children.

Edward

When the turkeys reached the base of Deshamikya Im’a mesa, they climbed. About half way up was a huge boulder where they settled. Here the turkeys, being supernatural creatures, imprinted their tracks in the stone. They looked back at the girl, who was now right behind them.
Arden
The older turkey spoke again to the flock,
Edward (as Turkey)
“Here she comes, lice and all. Si, (now), we will not be living like we have been. Our mother did not think about us. From now on we will roam the earth of our own free will. It will be like this, My little ones, sound out to your mother for the last time.”
Dinada, Arden, & Edward
Edward
The turkeys flew, laba:n . . .
Arden
Today, the rock from which they flew is called the Place of the Turkey Tracks.
Dinanda
This happened in ancient time.
Dinanda, Arden, & Edward
Le:' semkoni'kya.
Fiddle tune
“Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss”
(The cast dances a Kentucky Running Set.)
I Grew Up on a Farm

Kim

Whew! That'll keep you in shape won't it! I always did love to dance. From the time I was just a little bitty thing I was dancing with ever’body and anything. Now, some folks don’t like to dance much. They say it’s too much like work. Well, I tell you, I’ve done both, and I know the difference.

I grew up on a farm. It was the same farm that my family had lived on as far back as anybody could remember. It wasn’t such a big farm, but it was big enough to keep my grandpa and grandma, Uncle Henry, Aunt Myrtle, their six girls, my mama and daddy, my brother and me, twenty milk cows, however many pigs was born that year, a bunch of chickens, a passel of barn cats, and a dog.

We grew ever’thing we eat and ever’thing our animals eat—and done most ever’thing by hand too—plowing with mules, hoeing and harvesting, cannin’, pickeling, and drying ever’thing that could be canned, pickeled, and dried, bakin’ our own bread from the wheat we grew, and washin’ clothes on the wash board. And all them clothes had to be ironed. My grandma taught me to iron when I was eight. She’d say, “When you’re done with that sheet, young lady, I don’t want to see a single wrinkle in it. Don’t give it a lick and a promise, girl, do it right the first time!”

Well, we went to bed early of a night, and we went to bed tired.
We worked hard, but we never worked alone. Families and neighbors would go to each other’s farms to help with the work . . . in the spring, fer the cleanin’ and the plantin’, in the summer fer the cannin’ and the hay makin’, and in the fall fer the butcherin’ and the harvestin’ of the crops . . . and at the end of the seasons, when the work was done, we had socials where everybody from all around got together fer a dance. We’d clean up and put on our best clothes, fresh off the clothesline, so starched and pressed we rustled when we walked. We’d all gather in a meadow that smelled of new mowed hay.

There’d be plenty of food to eat—Irene Seibert’s coconut roll, Beulah Thompson’s spice cake, Ella Crim’s tea rolls, ham, deviled eggs, potato salad, apple pie, peach pie, cherry pie, chocolate pie, green tomato pie! Apple cider in the fall and iced tea in the summer.

We’d eat all that good food then set a while to watch the sun go down over the other side of the mountain. Directly, the music would ring out, and we’d dance. Old folks, young folks, children, anybody that had any wind in ‘em at all would flat foot it, dance the reels, and waltz across that meadow in the moonlight as long as the fiddle and banjer players held out. When the last dog dropped, we’d start home, headed fer bed, with Sunday morning, milkin’, and church just a few hours away. We was tired alright, but it was a different kind of tired.
Nobody back home farms much anymore. Oh, we might put out a little garden, but we don't really farm. Most folks has some kind of time clock job, or no job at all. And there's them that's on the government draw. I got me a job. Two jobs really, 'cause it seems like I put in my eight hours, then go home and start workin' all over again. And, buddy, I'm on my own when I'm doin' it too. Sometimes my housework gets done, sometimes it don't. Now, I got a whole lot of things we didn't used to have when I was a kid—like a car and a TV, and a brand new, heavy duty, eight-cycle G.E. automatic washing machine 'cause I sure don't one bit miss washin' clothes on that wash board! And praise the Lord for permanent press, is what I say! There's some things I don't want to go back to.


But there's some things I miss too. I ain't been to a social in many a year. Ever'thing's changing so much and so fast, it can make you feel like you're out in some briar patch a-lookin' fer yourself." (pause) I guess for me though, it just comes down to the fact that I've danced by myself in my living room to the music comin' out of the radio, and I've waltzed across the meadow with folks that's dressed fer the occasion, and I know the difference.

(Folds into "Margaret's Waltz," played on the fiddle.)

(Corn dancers enter and stand upstage.)
Dinanda

Village women enjoy dancing. My mother danced the Harvest Dance when she was little. When the dance was over she was tired but had good feeling, clear mind, and was happy. She looked forward to such celebrations, not only for the dancing, but for the opportunity to be with the village women to prepare the harvest feast.

When a dance was scheduled, people would gather. My mother would join the activity with her folks, relatives, and friends. They would come together. One danced or one was a spectator. People participated by watching. This dancing and spectatorship was what my mother looked forward to. She grew up with this.

Today, when there is something like that in the village, the people still gather. At a big celebration, women—the old and the young—happily join in the activities. Everybody pitches in. They do things together because they are teaching each other. So when something is happening, who is responsible? It is these women folk! Cold or rain, they bake bread or cook stew. Because of these women folk, festive food gets done. They help to meet the traditional ways of the village. We women are involved in meeting the religious obligations.

I talk about women, and at the time of winter festivities, when the people cook together, grinding corn, everyone looks forward to it. Before the actual day of the grinding, there is preparation. Mano and metates are gathered. Corn is crushed.

On the day of the corn grinding, during the late afternoon or evening, women and the villagers gather with

Village Women Enjoy Dancing

Luwal'an A:wokya Yodiba: Elumana:we

Dinanda

Luwal'an ma' a:wokya yode: elumana:we, Hom Tsitda dem ts'an'an, lesna Sade'chi: yodekkyaa. Oda: dechun'ap yude'chinande, che'k'wat an tsemakwi:w mola'kya, an tsemakwi:w k'okshi'kya. Hish k'ettsankya. Le'na' dey'on akkya odipdun'ona', dap ido:wo'annuwap, ants'ummeshekkyaa.


enthusiasm. When the song starts (drumming begins), grinding begins. Corn grinding is done with joy and with ease. The corn grinders—girls, women, and older folks—cleanse their minds and hearts. They are happy in each other’s company. They are attentive to each other. There is eating and dancing. There is talking—clans, households, everyone for that time becomes one people. Everyone is of one mind. When this happens, let it be, for we are happy.

When there is work to be done, why shouldn’t we celebrate?! We look forward to it because at the time of the Emergence, when we came out of our Mother Earth, we received a gift. We were blessed with the seed family, and the people are protected by them. Also, when we talk about the flesh of the seed, who will be among us forever, they too are in the form of women; we are talking about our spiritual children, the Corn Maidens.

**Corn Maiden Dance**

(In the winter fasting period, the Corn Maiden family of seeds are guarded and lullabies are sung to them to ensure that they rest like babies. The dance is the rocking of the babies.)

(Corn Maiden dancers exit.)

**Ron, Tommy, & Kim**

**Following the Seasons** *(song)*

The corn grows green
And the corn grows tall.
The sun shines down
And the warm rains fall.
New life springs from the old,
It’s something to believe in.
And this old world keeps spinning round,
Sometimes up, sometimes down,
Summer, winter, spring, and fall
Following the seasons.

Oknak’yanuwaps, sunhapba dahch’at deh’apba, a:wokya
dap hame’ luwa’ona’ ayu’anikde’h bachelana. Denan
tsemakwi: dap ik’emaw k’okshunaw. Ma’ k’ettsannishsh’i:
twillaba’ a:deyak’yan. Iyyayulashshik’yan awa:w.
Idonak’yan na: yodibanna. Iyashshu’wadak’yan—
annodi:we, k’akwenuli:we, habon’ona’ wans doibint a:ho’
aviyo’onna. Dobinbe tse’nakwin illabanna. Le’ leyadip, chi’
cele lesnadi, hon ik’ettsananna.

Lesna’ ikwa:n’annuwap, kop ma’ lat hon kwa’
ant’ummehnapshukwa?! Hon ant’ummehna:wa,
leha’ba chimik’yanak’yap, yam Awidelin Tsit’annan hon
ukkwayip, ho’na’ yanitchiya’kya. Dosshonan demlanaha’
ho’na’ yanitchiya’kya, akkya a:ho’i’ a:dehya. Akkya hon
a:shi’na ya:maye. Ma’ uk’wat ist ho’n awan dowa shi’na:w
A:ho’—A:down E:washdok’i.

**Miwe’ A:wodabanna**

*(Dehts’in a:deshkwibap, A:down E:washdok
a:wa:yuyubatchinak’yan, wiha ts’an ikna’ awadnenabanna
akkya iyude’chinahna:wa. Luk odan miwe’ a:danak’yan
akkya a:ho’i’ yanitchiya’k’yan.)*

*(Miwe’ A:wodanak’we’ ukkwayinna.)*

**Ron, Tommy, & Kim**

**Debikwaynan an haydoshna: wotdaban dinane.**

Shetda: ashenan ikenak’ya
Yadokkya an dek’yahan baniyu
Da: lidokkya a:yusu a:baniyu.
Kwa’hol a:lashshina’kow’annan chim’on a:wiyo’a,
Hish lukkya’ ildemanakya.

La:l luk ulohnan lashhina idullapcho,
Ishol iyamana, ishol manikkyana,
Olo’ik’ya, dehts’in, delakwayyi, dap miyashenak’ya
Debikwaynan an haydoshna: wotdaban dinane.
In the summer, the Uwanami, Keepers of the Rain, would release the clouds to the people. When the clouds bellowed up into the sky, the feelings of the villagers rose in joyous anticipation.

As they raced to their fields, the thunder clouds burst. The old ones, though they may have seemed feeble a short while earlier, weren't. No! During the downpour, like ants, they scurried about making small diversion channels. What little amount of rain that fell was collected. The plants grew willingly.

Raising a crop means dealing with a number of things like skunks, porcupines, raccoons, and sometimes deer, all critters who like to eat tender plants. Other times, it is the grasshoppers and birds. With this understanding, the people humbled themselves to the animals, the birds, and the insects.
Edward
“Yes, go ahead and eat to your heart’s content. However, do not allow yourself to do any damage. Leave some so there will be something left to ripen. Eat and be on your way,” they would say.

Dinanda
Yes, the people used to talk to the animals, too.
Don’t you know, there was a time when animals and people could talk.

They still can talk . . .

Yeah, but not to each other.

Maybe if we listened real close, we could.

I don’t know, but I do know there was a boy who lived in the mountains who could talk to animals. His name was Jack.

“Howdy, my name is Jack.”

Now Jack and his family was poor people, had to raise every thing they eat. So they couldn’t afford for the animals to be eating up every thing.

But Jack had listened real good and he could talk to animals, so he went to ‘em and told ‘em,
Corn Mountain/Pine Mountain: Following the Seasons

**Tommy**
“Look here, you critters, you can’t be eating the seeds we plant or the corn ‘fore it gets ripe or we’ll all starve to death. You wait ‘til it’s harvest and I’ll see you get fed plenty.”

**Ron & Tommy**
So they made a deal.

**Kim**
And it worked out purty good.

**Ron**
But now, you know them Zuni critters, they couldn’t help stealing some ‘ever now and then. Hit’s their nature.

**Kim**
In the same country there was this King and he had ever’thing, just about, that anybody could ever wish fer.

**Ron**
But, he got to thinkin’ what he really wanted was a grandson, somebody to leave his kingdom to.

**Kim**
He only had one daughter, and she wasn’t married.

**Ron**
So the king set out looking fer a husband for her. He got plenty young fellows

**Kim**
and a few ol’ ‘uns.
But none of them suited the king. He'd sent his girl to the best schools.

She had music training and dance lessons and she could speak ever' language in the world.

And this girl shore didn't want no feller her daddy would pick.

Them fellers kept coming, she kept turning 'em down, and finally the king got aggravated. He sent out a notice all over the country: (as King) “Anybody who wants to marry the king's daughter has got to be able to speak a language she can't speak.” And if they couldn't, they was gonna get their heads chopped off.

That slowed them fellers down some.

But some still showed up.

(Parlez-vous Français?)

“Oui, je parle Français.”

“Off with his head.”

Ron

Lesnapde Ley an dekkwin kwa' kwa'dikhol i:de'ch'amme'kya. Ley yam e'le' ts'ina:wo'anna'kowa, hish a:k'okshi'kowa, isnok'on alluk'ekkya.

Kim

An e'le' dene: dap oda: anikk'ypka

Ron

da: hish ulohnan demla kwa'hol bena elana'kowa beyep anikwa'kya.

Kim

Luk okya da:chi kwa' chuw ottsi an datchu akshihan'ona andeshemanamkya.

Ron


Kim

Le'na' de'on akkya a:tsawak ko:wi' yu'lahkudikya.

Ron

Lesnapde dem da: a:de'chilkya.

Tommy (Tsawak yashna)

“Parlez-vous Français?”

Kim (an E'le' yashna)

“Oui, je parle Français.”

Ron (Ley yashna)

“Oshokkwihna:we.”
Arden (as Feller)
“Como se llama, mama?”

Kim
“Mi nombre es María.”

Ron & Tommy
“Off with his head.”

Edward (as Feller)
“Dom ho’ yillun’iyha.”
(“I want to marry you.”)

Kim
“Ma’ U.”
(“It’s up to ‘U’” [Slang—Zunglish])

Ron, Tommy, & Arden
“Off with his head!”

Ron
The king was having a high ol’ time, but he made the mistake of chopping off the head of a witch’s son.

Kim
And that ol’ witch made a vow she was gonna get even. Before long, strange things started happening to the king and his daughter.

Ron
A pack of wild Zuni dogs moved into the king’s basement, and by night they’d travel out over the village terrorizing the people. And anybody who went into the basement got eat up.
Then one morning the princess woke up and she was covered in warts from head to toe.

Nobody could stand to look at her, much less want to marry her!

Rats and mice took over the king’s kitchen. Thousands of ‘em in the food, pots, pans, swimming in the buttermilk. Yech!

Meanwhile, Jack lived so far back in the hills, he’d just now got the news about the princess looking fer a husband.

He thought maybe he’d give his luck a try, so he went to his animal friends and told ‘em,

“Jack, you better take some of us with you.”


“Do’ ayyu’ya:na kwa’ kya:k’i’ do’ hol ana:ma’ma.”

“Do’ ko’le’ap ko:wi’ dapde is:atdo: andeshem’anna.”
Tommy
“No, now, I reckon you all better stay here. You know how the people that live in town are. They might not understand us traveling together.”

Kim
But now the animals decided that somebody needed to go, and as Jack was leaving, two fleas jumped off his ol’ dog onto his coat.

Ron
Jack traveled along

Kim
and traveled along.

Ron
Then he heard,

Kim (as Cat)
“Meow, help.”

Dinanda (another Cat)
“Meow, help.”

Tommy
Jack run over to a pond and saw a sack in the water, and the cries was coming from that sack.

Kim & Dinanda
“Meow, help. Meow, help.”

Tommy
Jack jerked that sack out of the water and two little kittens fell out.
Kim & Dinanda
Nearly drowned and spittin’ water. “Psst, phee . . .”

Tommy
“You fellers okay?”

Kim
“Meow, yes, Jack, we’re okay now, thanks to you.”

Dinanda
“But we’re awful cold and hungry.”

Tommy
“Well I better just take you with me then.”

Ron
So Jack stuck ‘em in his coat pockets, so they could
warm up, and off he went.

Kim
Next day, Jack come up on some boys playing in the
road.

Ron
They had a string tied around a toad frog’s leg and ever
time he’d jump, they’d jerk him back.

Edward (as Frog)
“Ribet, oh me, oh my. Ribet, oh me, oh my.”

Tommy
“Here you all stop that ‘fore I snatch you bald-headed.”

Kim
Them boys took off running hard as they could go—not
‘cause Jack threatened ‘em, but because he had done it
in frog language.
Tommy
Which is a scary sounding thing to non-frogs.

Edward
"Ribet, oh me, oh my. Ribet, you actually speak toad."

Tommy
"Yes sir I do, and I'm mighty sorry 'bout them human animals. Young 'uns can be mean. Are you all right?"

Edward
"Oh me, oh my, yes I'm fine. My leg's a mite pulled, but I'll be okay."

Tommy
"Well maybe you better come with me. Them boys liable to come back."

Kim
So Jack stuck the toad-frog in his pouch and on he went.

Ron
It was just getting 'bout dark when Jack got up to the palace.

Tommy
Ever' door in town was locked.

Kim
Ever' window barred.

Ron
In a few hours, them dogs would be roaming the streets.

Tommy
Ma' uhsone bena: dophol atdanni kwa' chuwa dakkya de'ammapba.

Edward
"Wibit, ya'anna ho:o. Wibit, do' den elleya dokkya'ama beye:a."

Tommy

Edward
"Ya'ana ho:o, ya'ana holo, eye hom kwa' ko'ley'ammme. Ho' ko:wi' sakwi: hashin'apde, ma' che'k'wat ho' elek'yanna."

Tommy
"Ma' ko'ma honk'wat hom do' il a:nuwa. Uhs tsats'ana: honk'wat ko'le'ap ik'walt a:wiyan na."

Kim
Akkya isk'ons Jack yam k'wapbon'an dakkya ulunan das lal a:kya.

Ron
Hish chim dep'widin lesde:na' Jack Ley an k'ya'ke dehyakwin de'chikya.

Tommy
Luwal'an hoi et'ch'amme' awe:na: an'uldopkya.

Kim
Deml ashsho'wa: he:doma: ayalapkya.

Ron
Domk ko:wi' dela'ap, uhsona wattsida ona'kowa a:wallunna.
Tommy
Jack could hear 'em howlin.

Arden, Edward, & Dinanda (as Dogs)
“Ar rowl, ar rowl. Cursed! Cursed!”

Tommy
Jack started thumping on the castle door, “Hey, let me in!”

Ron (as King)
“Go away ‘fore these dogs eat you.”

Tommy
“Let me in. I’ve come to marry the princess.”

Kim
The door flung open and there was the king.

Ron
“Are you crazy? There’s mad dogs eatin’ people and you’re talking ‘bout marryin’? Uh, by the way, have you seen the princess lately?”

Tommy
“No I ain’t never seed her. But, if I can stop them dogs, can I git a look?”

Ron
“A hundred has tried and a hundred has died, but if you can stop ‘em I reckon I might consider you fer a son-in-law.”

Kim
Meanwhile them Zuni dogs was carryin’ on.

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Revealing a Zuni–Appalachia Collaboration

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Tommy
Jack yanhadiya:kya, doms k’ona:w ik’eyadopkya.

Arden, Edward, & Dinanda (Wattsida yashna) (Wohnok’yan) “An’ashena’kya! An’ashena’kya!”

Tommy
Jack Ley an k’ya:kwe lan’ans awe:n’ans dopdok’ekkya, “Awshu, hom kwadok’yanaw:e!”

Ron (Ley yashna)
“Lu’ le’em holi da:ch’at dom luk wattsida idona:wa.”

Tommy
“Hom kwadok’yanaw:e. Ho’ princess’ya yillukyan’i ya.”

Kim
Awe:nan yetch’amme hol yaldihap, Ley ela’kya.

Ron

Tommy
“Ella kwa’ dem kya:k’i ho’ un’amme. Anak’yat, honk’wat ist ho’ wattsida dechunek’yap, kwa’sh hom do’ una:k’yashshukwa?”

Ron

Kim
Arden, Edward, & Dinanda
“Ar rowl, ar rowl. Cursed! Cursed!”

Tommy
“Give me some food and a light and shut the door behind me.”

Ron
“No time for that! So long Jack.” (King shoves Jack into the basement.)

Kim
Jack started easing his way down into that dark basement.

Arden, Edward, & Dinanda
“Ar rowl, ar rowl.”

Tommy
“Hey fellers it’s me, Jack!”

Kim
Them dogs couldn’t believe Jack could talk their language.

(Arden, Edward, and Dinanda begin to carry on in Zuni. Jack listens, shaking his head, like he understands.)

Tommy
“Now let me get this straight. The witch buried a human skull in the basement. You all have to stay here and guard it and eat nothin’ but humans ‘til somebody digs up the skull. Is ‘at ’bout it?”

Arden, Edward, & Dinanda
“You got it, Jack!”
Ron
So Jack dug up the skull and let them dogs out of the basement. They’re still running around all over the village, never did go home.

Kim
The king was overjoyed.

Ron
“Jack you done it! I can’t believe it! I had dog experts from all over the world, but none of ’em had ever seen nothin’ like them Zuni dogs.”

Tommy
“Well thank you King, but I’ve sorty worked up an appetite. Reckon I could get some supper?”

Ron
“Uh, well Jack, you see, uh, well, uh since we’ve had this dog problem, I’ve lost my kitchen help and we been eating Chu Chu’s pizza a lot lately. But, uh, you go on to the kitchen and if you can find anything you’re welcome to it. I’d go with you but uh, I better go check on the princess, tell her the good news.”

Kim
Jack went on to the kitchen, but when he tried to open the door, them rats and mice was so thick the door barely move.

Tommy
When Jack finally squeezed in,

Kim
that door slammed shut.
Tommy
And Jack was standing in rats up to his knees.

Kim
And they was all staring at him

Tommy
licking their jaws.

Ron
'Bout that time them two kittens poked their heads out.
They smelled supper.

Kim & Dinanda (as Cats)
"Looks like you could use some help Jack."

Ron
Jack never seed nothing like it. Didn't take 'em half an
hour to clean out them rodents. Then them kittens
stretched out on the hearth, went sound asleep.

Tommy
Jack figgered he wadn't as hungry as he thought. He
figgered he'd maybe order one of them pizzas later,
went lookin' fer the princess.

Kim
The princess was not about to show herself, warts and
all, to nobody.

Ron
The king was on his way down stairs when Jack found
him.

Tommy
"How long did you say you'd been eatin' pizzas? That
kitchen could use some cleaning."
Ron
“I know Jack. I’m sorry. I just hoped—you got rid of them dogs, and I thought . . . maybe—but I guess it was too much to . . .”

Tommy
“Oh them rats is gone.”

Ron
“Gone! I don’t believe it! Jack you are a man atter my heart.”

Tommy
“It ain’t your heart I come atter. I’d shore like to meet the princess.”

Ron
“Uh, well Jack maybe we better wait ’til morning. She don’t exactly look her best right now.”

Kim
The next day, the princess sneaked a peek at Jack waiting downstairs and realized this was no ordinary feller, and that the only way he was gonna leave was to let him look at her.

Ron

Kim
Dewap shamle, princess de’ona ik’olo’ dumabikway:nan Jack manikya shoky’ap una’kya. Luk tsawak kwa’dens hish dekkwande chuwhol de’amme’kya, da: inadin’amme princess’ya unak’yan’iyahkya, da:ch’at kwa’ dehwa:shukwa.

Ron
Jack yam kuwaye, dakkya, ashshu’wende uhsona dakkya princess’ya kela ank’ohak’yakkya.

Edward (Dakkya yashna)
“Wibit, Jack, hish e’k’okshi’ Una!”

Tommy
“Hopbi?” (Hish k’yap ikwilikya.)
Kim
The princess could see the look on his face, “So, you want to marry me? Well Jack, come and seal it with a kiss!”

Tommy
Jack was not one to back down, but there was no way he could kiss this frog-woman. Frogs was fine. Women, fine. But a frog-woman—never!

Ron
By now the frog was in heaven.

Edward
“Look at that. Oh my goodness! Jack get up close to her.”

Kim
The princess heard the frog carryin’ on and thought Jack was making fun of her, so she walked right up to him and stuck her lips out, “Go on dog-boy, kiss me if you dare!”

Ron
That frog saw his chance. “Smack, slurp!” Right on the lips, that tongue flying ever’ which way over them warts.

Kim
“Oh, my goodness!”

Kim
Jack hish nobon ko’inadip, princess una’kya, “Awo homsh do’ yillun’iyha’shi? Ma’ ko’ma, Jack k’yalem’a:nan hom ts’upli akkya dom benan hashinak’yanna!”

Tommy

Ron
Dachi dakkya hish hol imo’kya, hish an ihaluhkya.

Edward
“Lakkwash una. O:...elu, Jack allotdek’ya.”

Kim

Ron

Kim
“O:...elu!”
Tommy
And there, before Jack, stood the most beautiful woman
e’ed’ ever seen. Skin the color of sunlight, hair red as a
cardinal’s wing and thick as a horse’s mane, falling from
her head to the floor. Jack was in love!

Kim
But the princess had seen the look in Jack’s eye when
she was ugly, and she decided to test him. “Men never
look at real beauty. They look at the surface. Tell me
Jack, what color is my hair?”

Tommy
“Ree—”

Kim
“Wait! I’m gonna give you a fair chance. You have ‘til
tomorrow. If you can tell me the color of my hair,
maybe I’ll consider you fer a husband.”

Ron
Now, while all this was going on, them two little fleas
that Jack had brought from home was fallin’ in love, just
like Jack and the frog, but it was the princess’ hair that
they was in love with.

Dinanda (as Flea)
“Oh my goodness, if I could just run up and down from
the top of her head to her toes in that hair.”
Arden (as second Flea)
“I could just die happy. I could just die happy.”

Ron
So in that hair they jumped. All night Jack tried his best to figger out what the princess had meant.

Tommy
“Tell me the color of my hair? Dang it, it’s red! Red as a cardinal’s wing!”

Kim
But Jack knowed it was a trick question and he was afraid he was gonna fail.

Ron
Meanwhile, the fleas was in hair heaven, and they discovered the secret.

Kim
There, hidden deep in the center of her head was one single strand of snow white hair, covered by thousands and thousands of bright red strands. The princess knew, but her vanity had never before let her tell.

Ron
The next morning she combed out her hair and left it loose flowing to the floor.

Kim
“What color is my hair, Jack?”

Ron
Each of the fleas jumped into one of Jack’s ears.

Arden (Kwilik'yanna:na Bilasho yashna)
“Ma' lesna’ dap ho' k'ettsan ashenna. Ma' lesna’ dap ho' k'ettsan ashenna.”

Ron

Tommy

Kim

Ron
Da:chi lesi' a:na' princess an oshokk'wan bilasho achiya' hish daya:w’ an ihaluhkya, isk'on hol a:chi kwa'hol i'k'o'lo'kowa awakya.

Kim
Lakhol hish princess an oshokk'wan idiwa dobinde dayan k'ohanna aksi'kya, ko:hol mil de’chi' hish daya: a:shilowa akkya bo'ya'kya. Princess e:t ayyu'ya:na'kya, lemapde i:wichem'an'on akkya kwa' kya:k'i' benamkya.

Ron
Dewap shamle hish eledokna' ibishnan yam daya: awelakwin a:bani:k'ekkya.

Kim
“Ko’p ho’ daya: ina, Jack?”

Ron
Bilasho achi i:bu'la'hinan a:chi Jack an lashhokdi:wa'kowa' a:chi isamma: kwadokya.
Tommy
“What?”

Tommy
“You all are crazy!”

Tommy
“Red and white?!”

Kim
Kwa’ princess hish ildemanamkya! Kwa’ kya:ki chuwhol lesna’ ele lotde un’amme’kya. “Jack, ma’ imat hom do’ lashshik deya’dun’ona ho’s te’manna.”

Tommy

Kim

Ron
A:chi i:wiyyilkuya’en
Kim
they spent part of the time in the castle
Ron
and part of their time in the mountains
Kim
where the princess learned to talk to all the animals.
Ron
Now this story just goes to show you . . .
Kim
you don't have to be rich to be smart.
Tommy
You don't even have to be smart to be rich.
Kim
And the most important language of all
All
is the language of the heart.

(Harvest dancers enter and stand upstage.)
Arden

Now harvest time comes to the people. The crops are gathered—corn, melons, squash, and wheat. All are sent up to the village where the women have prepared special storage rooms.

Edward

Once stored properly, the people of the Middle Place feel fulfilled. The year has been good; therefore the Sun Priest, or another spiritual leader, summons the people.

Arden

He proclaims that the harvest is made. That it is plentiful. That the obligations have been met, and now time will be spent together. Word of the coming harvest dance echoes through the village. Everyone’s thoughts are on the dance. Every night, the dancers—boys and girls—meet to practice.

Edward

The big day comes. At dawn, everywhere in the village there is cooking. The grains and herbs grown from the fields are used. Many loaves of bread are baked. Girls help by drawing water, while boys chop wood.
Arden
Meanwhile, all the dancers from the village start fitting themselves into their ceremonial costumes. In their regalia, the dancers, including the singers, gather outside the big plaza, soon to be packed with onlookers. Once everyone is in place, the singing starts and the harvest dancers enter. Dancing continues until about noon, when the food that was prepared is brought forth. The religious leaders are the first to take morsels to honor Mother Earth and also to honor the ancestors in order that they, too, can join the day. Soon the whole village is eating until all are satisfied.

Edward
Guests from other tribes and communities are present. Good feelings and words are shared. Some barter seeds until, again, the Harvest Dance comes. Now there is nothing but color in the plaza. Girls, boys, and singers are dressed beautifully, “Hish chikwannaye.”

Dinanda
The girls—some are bare around the shoulders and legs, while others are in full costume. Their feet are covered with white buckskin moccasins and leggings. The rest of their body is covered with a black manta, worn over one shoulder. A red sash and a white sash are tied around the manta at the waist. A white cape with black and red stripes is worn around the back of the shoulders.

Edward
A full necklace of turquoise, coral, and strings of shell, along with a squash blossom necklace, boasts the chest. The headwear is a combination of colorful braids, a squash blossom, ornamented board, and many plumes of parrot and eagle. These girls move gracefully with a special kind of beauty, like that of an eagle’s fluff—full bodied and delicate.

Dinanda

Edward
The boys are in red buckskin moccasins and leggings. The white kachina ceremonial kilts are wrapped around the hips and waist and supported by a red sash and a white and green embroidered sash. Their torsos are bare, their chests partially covered by the necklaces of turquoise, coral, and shell beads. A single eagle fluff adorns each head.

And the singers are just as colorful!

Now songs echo throughout the pueblo. As one group enters with a song, another appears at the opposite end, singing loud to outdo the first. As the groups draw together, in mild competition, everyone’s pulse races.

The dancing continues all day. Then about the time when the sun falls low, when all the groups have entered the plaza, “ehhe!” (“Yes!”), the grand finale, the “big dance” comes.

Now it is not unreal to think that the whole world is singing, because the songs, sung from the top of the lungs, resonate everywhere, even to the distant corn fields. Look, here comes the Harvest Dance.


Dene:na:kwe: dem da: lesna'dik leya' a:ts'oy'a!


Hish ulohnan demla denaban ikna hish domt dena: sala'ana. Lahnhol deyatchi:wa'kowa' de'ehima' dehax'don k'eyadok'yanna. Ma's ist sade'chi: a:bikwayi.
Harvest Dance
(Slow steady beat. Meant for a large group and to encourage spectators to join in. The lyrics speak of bringing a song—“I will sing a beautiful song for you.”)
(Dance concludes. Dancers form a semi-circle upstage.)
(Flute begins, singers pick up the song.)

Ron, Tommy, & Kim
Bright Morning Star (song)
Bright morning star’s arising
Bright morning star’s arising
Bright morning star’s arising
Day is a-breakin’ in my soul.
Oh where are our dear mothers
Oh where are our dear mothers
Oh where are our dear mothers
Day is a-breakin’ in my soul.
Where are our dear fathers
Where are our dear fathers
Where are our dear fathers
Day is a-breakin’ in my soul.
They have gone to heaven a-singing
They have gone to heaven a-singing
They have gone to heaven a-singing
Day is a-breakin’ in my soul.
Bright morning star’s arising
Bright morning star’s arising
Bright morning star’s arising
Day is a-breakin’ in my soul.

Sade’chi: Odanne
(Yu’lahkuna’ dundo’ana. Luk odan em’ona odipdun’ona, akleya demaya’kwe’ iwosli’dun’ona’ ihakke’yakanna. Denan’an kwa’hol tos’ya denap’ihumona beye’a—“Do’na’ ho’a:wan denan tos’ya ho’ dena’unna.”)
(Denan chun’ap, odikwe idullapna’ mas’an iluwayaldok’ya.)
(Bu:bunan ts’ana’ ik’oshna kwayyi, denena:kwe’ iwoslik’ya.)

Ron, Tommy, & Kim
Mo’ Kwa:n Osena Walolonne (denanne)
Mo’ Kwa:n Osena walolon ik’eyadok’ya
Mo’ Kwa:n Osena walolon ik’eyadok’ya
Mo’ Kwa:n Osena walolon ik’eyadok’ya
Hom shehna’an loks yadokwayi.
Awshu hop ho’i a:wan elu a:tsitda
Awshu hop ho’i a:wan elu a:tsitda
Awshu hop ho’i a:wan elu a:tsitda
Hom shehna’an loks yadokwayi.
Awshu hop ho’i a:wan elu a:datchu
Awshu hop ho’i a:wan elu a:datchu
Awshu hop ho’i a:wan elu a:datchu
Hom shehna’an loks yadokwayi.
Yam hol iyude’chinahnapdundekkwin denena: a:wkya
Yam hol iyude’chinahnapdundekkwin denena: a:wkya
Yam hol iyude’chinahnapdundekkwin denena: a:wkya
Hom shehna’an loks yadokwayi.
Mo’ Kwa:n Osena walolon ik’eyadok’ya
Mo’ Kwa:n Osena walolon ik’eyadok’ya
Mo’ Kwa:n Osena walolon ik’eyadok’ya
Hom shehna’an loks yadokwayi.
Now winter falls on the people. The village slows down. The people tell stories, ancient tales and old histories. When the snow falls, while everything is caped in white and silence is in the air, our Mother Earth rests. Likewise, our children, the Corn Maidens, sleep.

People ensure that the seeds get rest. Like a baby, the corn family is rocked, as though in a cradle, and lullabies are sung to them. All rest. The days to come will be for religious observation and fasting, hoping for more blessing.

People lived like this since the Time of the Beginning, fending for themselves. There was no procrastination. The people supported each other willingly. When it came to planting, the seed family was nurtured by the community, season after season.

Once a way of life, now this is but a poetic reflection. Today, we do not persevere on behalf of the seed family and Mother Earth. Can this be part of the reason for the illness throughout the land?
Dinanda
We were once a people like this, the Children of the Middle Place.

Solemn Zuni song
(Steady, slow drum beat, constant rattles in the background.)

All
Homeward Now (song)
Homeward now, shall I journey,
Homeward upon the rainbow.
Homeward now, shall I journey,
Homeward upon the rainbow.
To life unending and beyond it,
Yea, homeward now shall I journey.
To joy unchanging and beyond it,
Yea, homeward now shall I journey.
(Lights dim, then brighten. Cast bows, thanking the audience.)

Dinanda
Le'n hon a:ho' adeya'kya, Idiwana' An Chawe.

Ayyułashshina' delokk'yana' denak'yanna
(Shiwe' an deha:donanna. Dom's yulahkuna dondo'a:ma, mas'mun childi'anna.)

Deml'ona
Yam Heshoda:kwi Ke:si (denanne)
Yam heshoda:kwi ke:si, si ho's a:munwa,
Yam heshoda:kwin amidolanne akkya a:munwa.
Yam heshoda:kwi ke:si, si ho's a:munwa,
Yam heshoda:kwin amidolanne akkya a:munwa.
Hol dek'ohanan kwa' ibaldok'e:na'mankwi,
E:ha yam heshodakwin ke:si, si ho's a:munwa.
Hol isha'malde i'k'etsanne' a:deyakwi,
E:ha yam heshodakwin ke:si, si ho's a:munwa.
(Habiyan yulahkuna' akkalinna, lesnan ik'walt ihahiyak'yanna. Delapna:kvi idebouak'yanna, demaya:kwe' elahkwa: yaknak'yanna.)
Epilogue

Yalu'dennishshi Benanne

Arden

One time, when I was a young boy, eleven or twelve years old, my grandfather asked me to learn a song he had just composed for a kiva dance. So I sat down by him to learn this new song.

After he had sung the song to me several times, to where I felt comfortable to sing it on my own, he told me I must now carry this new song to the kiva. He said that I must do this for him because he was not feeling well. Then I got really nervous, but my grandfather encouraged me saying that it would be okay and that these men would listen to the new song. Before rising, I sang the song one more time.

I left the house for the kiva which was only about forty yards away. As I walked humming the song, suddenly a dog barked at me. I lost the song. Now I had to turn and go back to ask all over again. My grandfather just laughed and sang it to me.

Again, I left for the kiva humming the song. Now two or three dogs chimed in, and there went the song! My grandfather did not laugh as much this time, but again he gave me the song. Again I set forth, and after several more tries, I made it to the kiva.

I was really nervous when I finally walked in. I greeted the men, “K’n don dewanan a:deyaye?” and sat down. Before they could start singing, I spoke out, saying I had a song from my grandfather. They began teasing me.

Revealing a Zuni—Appalachia Collaboration
about it to where I almost lost it again. However, I did not want to go back to the house another time!

Finally, I sang the song for the kiva group, and when I got home, I told my grandfather that I did what he had asked me. He was very pleased and gave me some change to buy some chico sticks. He said that he was feeling fine now. Later that day I heard the dancers singing the new song in the big plaza.

Such is the way I learned. Now let us all learn. Let’s learn a dance together.

(When in a Native American community, the “Virginia Reel,” and when in a non-Native community, the Sade:chi:we [“Split Circle”] Dance.)
Indi
dividual
Contributors

Anne Beckett, of Santa Fe, New Mexico, was the executive director of Zuni A:shiwi Publishing from 1995-1998, and first proposed this book, which she has continued to help guide.

Tommy Bledsoe, of St. Augustine, Florida, is an artist, administrator, and teacher. A native of Scott County, Virginia, he began working with Appalshop as a June Appal recording artist in 1974 and was an actor and musician in the Roadside Theater ensemble from 1981 to 1996.

Gregory Cajete, of Santa Clara Pueblo, New Mexico, is an assistant professor of education at the University of New Mexico and dean of the Center for Research and Cultural Exchange at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. He is the author of Look to the Mountain and Native Science, Natural Laws of Interdependence.

Hal Cannon, of Salt Lake City, Utah, is the founding director of the Western Folklife Center in Elko, Nevada, and its well known offspring the Cowboy Poetry Gathering. He is a writer, musician, and producer, currently working on a public television documentary, Why the Cowboy Sings.
Individual contributors, continued

**Dudley Cocke**, of Norton, Virginia, is the director of Roadside Theater. He is a stage director, media producer, and author of numerous essays about cultural policy and rural life. His essays have appeared recently in American Theatre magazine and the periodicals Wind and Theater.

**Kim Neal Cole**, of Castlewood, Virginia, became a member of the Roadside Theater ensemble in 1986 after seeing the theater perform at her high school. She is a performer on stage and screen and is currently working on several community oral history and story collecting projects.

**Angelyn DeBord**, of Nickelsville, Virginia, is a visual artist, playwright, and performer. She often tours her solo performances which are drawn from her Appalachian and Native American heritages. She was a part of the Roadside Theater ensemble from 1975 to 1991.

**Tony Earley**, a native of Rutherfordton, North Carolina, is an assistant professor of English at Vanderbilt University. His fiction and nonfiction writing has appeared in a variety of publications, including the New Yorker and Harper’s, and his recent novel, Jim the Boy, is being adapted for television.
Wilfred Eriacho, Sr., of Zuni, New Mexico, is the director of bilingual education, administering the Zuni Public School District's operational bilingual education program and the Title VII System Improvement Grant. He devotes much of his time to his kiva.

Jane Hillhouse, of Kingsport, Tennessee, is a graphic designer and the owner of Hillhouse Graphic Design, which has won numerous awards including a National Clarion Award for her work as art director of Storytelling Magazine. She plays violin in the Kingsport Symphony Orchestra.

Arden Kucate, of Zuni, New Mexico, is a founding member of Idiwanan An Chawe. Presently, he is an elected member of the Zuni Tribal Council and holds a high position in his medicine society.

Dinanda Laconsello, of Zuni, New Mexico, is a performer with Idiwanan An Chawe and works as a teacher's aid in the Zuni Middle School while pursuing a degree in education.

Liz McGechy, of Norris, Tennessee, is a free-lance writer, editor, and musician. She has worked with Roadside Theater on several projects.
Individual contributors, continued

**Paul Neha**, of Zuni, New Mexico, now deceased, was employed by Pueblo Zuni as a carpentry teacher and served on many tribal committees. He held high positions in his religious medicine society and kiva, was a cultural mentor, and proudly served in the United States Marine Corps.

**Donna Porterfield**, of Norton, Virginia, is Roadside Theater's managing director and one of its writers. She coordinated the 1990-1996 Zuni–Roadside artistic exchange and collaboration. Her recent play, *Voices from the Battlefront*, a collaboration with an Appalachian women's shelter, addresses domestic violence.

**Ron Short**, of Big Stone Gap, Virginia, is a member of the Roadside Theater ensemble. He is a composer, performer, and playwright. A collection of his new songs is on the compact disc *Wings to Fly* (Copper Creek), and he is presently writing a new musical, *Two Sweethearts*.

**Taki Telonidis**, of Salt Lake City, Utah, is senior producer for Western Folklife Center Media where he produces features for public radio and television. He formerly worked for National Public Radio as an award-winning senior producer of Weekend All Things Considered and a producer for Morning Edition.
Edward Wemytewa, of Zuni, New Mexico, is the founding director of Idiwanan An Chawe. He is a playwright, performer, and visual artist whose prize-winning paintings and sculpture have been exhibited in museums in Arizona and New Mexico. In addition, he works on Zuni language projects through the Zuni Fish and Wildlife Department.

Dinah Zeiger, of Denver, Colorado, is an arts consultant and adjunct faculty member at Metropolitan State College of Denver and the University of Colorado-Denver. As a journalist and editor for twenty-five years, she was on the staffs of The Denver Post, The Wall Street Journal-Europe, Investor’s Business Daily, and McGraw-Hill, Inc.
Appalshop, of Whitesburg, Kentucky, is a multi-disciplinary arts and education center telling the Appalachian story from the inside-out in films, theater, music and spoken-word recordings, radio, and books. Appalshop's regional and national residencies support communities' efforts to celebrate their cultural strengths and solve their problems by publicly telling their stories.

The Western Folklife Center, of Elko, Nevada, is dedicated to the art of ordinary people in the West. Best known for its Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, the center also produces regular features about the region and its traditions for public radio and television.

Zuni Rainbow Project, of Zuni, New Mexico, is the only program sponsored by the Pueblo of Zuni Tribal Administration dealing with preservation and perpetuation of the Zuni language and culture. It supported the founding of Idiwanan An Chawe and has conducted outreach projects with public schools, universities, theaters, and indigenous language organizations.

Zuni A:shiwi Publishing, of Zuni, New Mexico, was created in 1995 by members of the Zuni Pueblo. It is the only independent, not-for-profit publisher located on a Native American reservation, and the only one devoted exclusively to preserving and promoting indigenous American cultures through books conceived and written by Native peoples.
The Journeys Home CD has nineteen tracks to make it easy for you to manipulate the recorded material to suit your purposes. For example, a teacher might assemble track 4 (Hairy Woman Story), track 6 (Turkey Girl Story), and track 15 (When Storytellers Became Beggars) for a classroom unit on story and storytelling. Please feel free to combine the tracks as your imagination wills.

The ability to listen carefully is becoming a lost talent, perhaps because most of us find it necessary to turn a deaf ear to the constant noise that surrounds us. We’ve become accustomed to half-listening. By giving more attention to the CD, with a calm spirit and big ears, we hope that you will enjoy it more.