

Your Family Arts Center

DALLAS CHILDREN'S THEATER

JUNGALBOOK

An adaptation of Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book Stories*

By Edward Mast

Act I (40 minutes)

Join the beloved characters Mowgli, Baloo, Bagheera and many more on an adventure in the jungle as a young man cub fights for survival!

Our story begins with Baloo the bear. He teaches the Law of the Jungle, explaining that no one survives unless they follow the Law. The rules must be abided, including never steal meat from another animal's kill, hunt in your own territory, and never kill men.

Unfortunately, some animals are slow learners. Two young wolves, Grab and Grey, fight over a piece of meat. Their leader, Akela, demands to know what it is and learns that it's a live man cub! Baloo reminds them that the Law of the Jungle states no killing of men. Bagheera, the panther, approaches and offers to buy the man cub in exchange for a big bull, but there's a catch: the wolves must raise the man cub as one of their own. Akela isn't sure about the deal until Sherakhan the tiger demands the meat back, explaining it belongs to him (and that he's already killed the man cub's parents). Horrified that Sherakhan has defied an important rule, the rest of the animals defend the little man cub and Sherakhan threatens he will be back to eat his meat. After the tiger leaves, Akela names the man cub "Mowgli" and Baloo and Bagheera also promise to protect him.

Ten years pass and Mowgli is now a young boy. He's learned much about the Law of the Jungle, but still has a lot more to learn. He and Grab and Grey mock a monkey until Baloo interrupts them. Mowgli is frustrated that he has to learn about the Law of the Jungle while Grab and Grey can do whatever they please. But, Baloo reminds him he needs the Law to stay safe in the jungle where there is much for Mowgli to fear.

Bagheera enters, and although Mowgli doesn't know him well he does know that Bagheera is a good hunter. Bagheera tells him he has nothing to fear, but Mowgli doesn't know what "fear" is. Chil the vulture flies in, happy to announce that the jungle is now in a drought. Chil will feast soon! Because of the drought, there is now a water truce amongst the animals – any animal can drink at the river without worry of being harmed. Even Sherakhan, followed by a hyena, appears to be following the rules of the water truce. However, he tempts the younger wolves with a promise of meat if they follow him. Akela leads the hesitant Grab and Grey away from Sherakhan. Mowgli doesn't understand why Sherakhan doesn't like him, and after he wanders off, Baloo tells Bagheera that although the panther has been able to protect Mowgli for the past ten years, he won't be able to protect him forever.

Grab and Grey grumble about Mowgli being in their wolf pack. Akela defends the man cub, but he can't stop the younger wolves from mocking Mowgli or even himself. After Akela leaves, the

monkey comes back and begins to mock Mowgli, too. Mowgli sees Sherakhan enter, and to his surprise, watches the tiger tempt Grab to undermine Akela.

Mowgli is upset that he's not a real wolf like the others. He doesn't see Kaa the python enter, but luckily Bagheera comes in just in time to save Mowgli from Kaa's hypnotic stare. Bagheera asks Mowgli what he saw in Kaa's eyes, and Mowgli admits he finally understands "fear."

Bagheera leaves just as Grab comes back from his meeting with Sherakhan. Mowgli angrily confronts him, but is pushed aside when Grey and Akela enter. Grab tells Akela they have brought him a buffalo to kill. Confused, Akela springs toward the buffalo, but quickly finds out it's a trap. Sherakhan runs on claiming that Akela tried to steal his meat and attacks the old wolf. Bagheera confronts Sherakhan, but it's too late to save Akela.

Intermission (15 minutes)

Act II (30 minutes)

After Sherakhan and the young wolves leave, Baloo tells Mowgli he needs to make a decision now that Akela is gone – stay or run away. Baloo reveals Bagheera as Mowgli's other protector, but, because he is a cat like Sherakhan, Bagheera can't kill the tiger to protect the man cub. Mowgli decides to run off to the manvillage and Bagheera and Baloo must let him go.

When Mowgli gets to the manvillage, he sees Hathi the elephant tied up. Mowgli scares the other humans away and rescues Hathi, learning in the process what rope is. He takes the rope with him back to the jungle.

Mowgli once again runs in to Kaa, who tells him the rain will be coming back soon. When Mowgli sees Bagheera, the panther says he will kill Sherakhan to save Mowgli but Mowgli states he will face the tiger himself. Bagheera sees the rope and tells Mowgli that he can't stay in the jungle if he uses that manthing.

Sherakhan has come back to the river for Mowgli, but the man cub is prepared to face him. When Sherakhan leaps at Mowgli, he captures the tiger in the rope. Then, Kaa's prediction of rain comes true, and the water rushes down, overflowing the river, and drowning the tiger.

Although Mowgli has finally triumphed over Sherakhan, he realizes he can't stay in the jungle anymore after using a manthing. He leaves, not truly knowing where he belongs. Baloo and Bagheera sadly say their farewells to the man cub they had protected for so long.

Notes:

- *This production has an intermission.*
- *There is a lot of discussion of death in this story (Mowgli's parents, the threat on Mowgli's life, Akela's and Sherakhan's ends)*
- *There will be moments when actors enter through the audience.*
- *Some theatrical elements will take place in the audience.*