

Peter Donaldson and The Salmonpeople Tour

PURPOSE: ***Achieve sustainable prosperity***

Peter Donaldson, consummate storyteller, educator and community organizer tours Salmon Nation every fall when the salmon are running. The goal is to stimulate, organize and measure citizen stewardship behavior over time. Strategies for meeting this goal flow in three project streams;

1. a one-man **touring theatrical show** that reminds us of our local history and invites conversation regarding the sustainability of our shared future,
2. a **citizen stewardship campaign** to catalyze grassroots coalition building and create a local sustainability report card process, and
3. a program of community-based **curriculum development** to effect change over generations, linking academic excellence to community sustainable prosperity.

ABOUT THE SHOW

Peter Donaldson's performance is spellbinding; a one man show with everybody in it. *Salmonpeople* is a tour de force of storytelling, lyric cartography, scientific soliloquy, and sweeping history. With good humor, good science and audacious storytelling, Peter Donaldson's *Salmonpeople* reaches all ages, everybody's bottom line, and one big landscape.

Salmonpeople is about the interdependence of salmon and people in the Pacific Northwest. The story is told through the eyes of one Cyrus Jackson, an everyman character who finds himself employed up at the local dam. With inquisitive charm and masterful freehand cartography, (100 rivers from memory!), Cyrus unfolds a lesson on the ultimate economics of our local ecology. Through one man's head-scratching, self-taught theories, we come to know our watershed address in a way we had never before imagined and can never forget. This inspiring theatrical experience tours the bioregion every fall as long as the salmon are running and good people everywhere are working out how to be citizen stewards.

FOUR CENTRAL THEMES

Salmon are our teachers. Salmon have evolved over 49 million years to inhabit every reach of the watershed. Salmon are teaching us to live within the boundaries of the natural systems that support all life, commerce and community. Now it is our turn to adapt and innovate. *Salmonpeople* is the story of who are and who we are to become.

Everyone knows how the real world works. This phrase echoes time and again throughout the performance. It reminds us that the current mythos we are living cannot be sustained much beyond our children's lifetime. Nature just doesn't have enough total resources for the entire world to sustain our current forms of consumption and waste. What is the real world? Who defines it? How does it work?

Listen. Cyrus, our everyman character, has no soapbox to stand on. His impact on those who experience him is the contagiousness of his curiosity. He models for us the capacity to learn, to listen for wisdom, and to think it through.

You got to put your toe in the river somewhere. This line also echoes throughout the show. It reminds us that, in the face of massive change, we cannot hope to do everything, nor should we give up for want of knowing where to start. As he picks his way through the issues and opportunities of our time, Cyrus says to himself, “You got to put your toe in the river somewhere.”

THE GOAL OF THE SHOW is...

The *Salmonpeople* story awakens in people of all generations the call to citizen stewardship. The main character in the story, Cyrus, is a model of curiosity, openness and learning. The point of the story is to inform and inspire action; to learn how to create and live out the story we wish to leave as a legacy to our children and to our children’s children for generations yet to be born. But what’s the right story? Do we initiate our children as wise stewards or blind consumers?

Standing, as we are, at the dying end of the industrial revolution, an exuberant, albeit shortsighted economic premise based on a linear continuum of extraction, consumption, and waste, we look to the emergence of a new economic model, one no less vibrant, but worlds wiser. New patterns of energy, commerce and community are emerging from the fundamental cycles of nature. In a word, sustainability. This new economic order will be based on ecological intelligence. In the long view, there is no competition between our economic needs and environmental sustainability. How could there be? It’s one system. How silly to think that if the environment wins, people lose. Do the young people whom we are preparing to enter the adult world know this? Do they have the skills to bring forth the requisite transformation? *The Salmonpeople Tour* travels from city to city asking the questions, listening for the answers, and passing along the best ideas. Solutions abound. Storytellers needed.

ABOUT PETER DONALDSON

Known as the Johnny Appleseed of Salmon Nation, Peter’s spirited campaign is based on his ancestral relationship to salmon. His grandfather, Lauren Donaldson, Professor Emeritus of Fisheries at the University of Washington, was world renown as a salmon expert. His father, Jack Donaldson, directed Fish and Wildlife agencies in the State of Oregon and the Columbia River Basin for two decades. Peter’s son, Oliver, was, at age 16 the original webmaster for **www.peterdonaldson.net**. Peter’s daughter, Alexandra, plans to manage a sustainable café. Four generations of the Donaldson family have stepped into the streams where salmon and people negotiate the future. Peter is a master storyteller, educational consultant, and innovative facilitator, with 25 years experience in supporting learning communities, managing non-profits, designing curriculum, building partnerships and promoting new forms of organizational learning. Peter has authored fourteen plays, produced some sixty others, and self-publishes his poetry in an annual collection. He has created numerous school partnerships integrating history, the ecological sciences, excellence in writing, drawing from observation, and theater. Peter is well known for his one man touring shows, ***Leonardo da Vinci*** and ***Salmonpeople***.