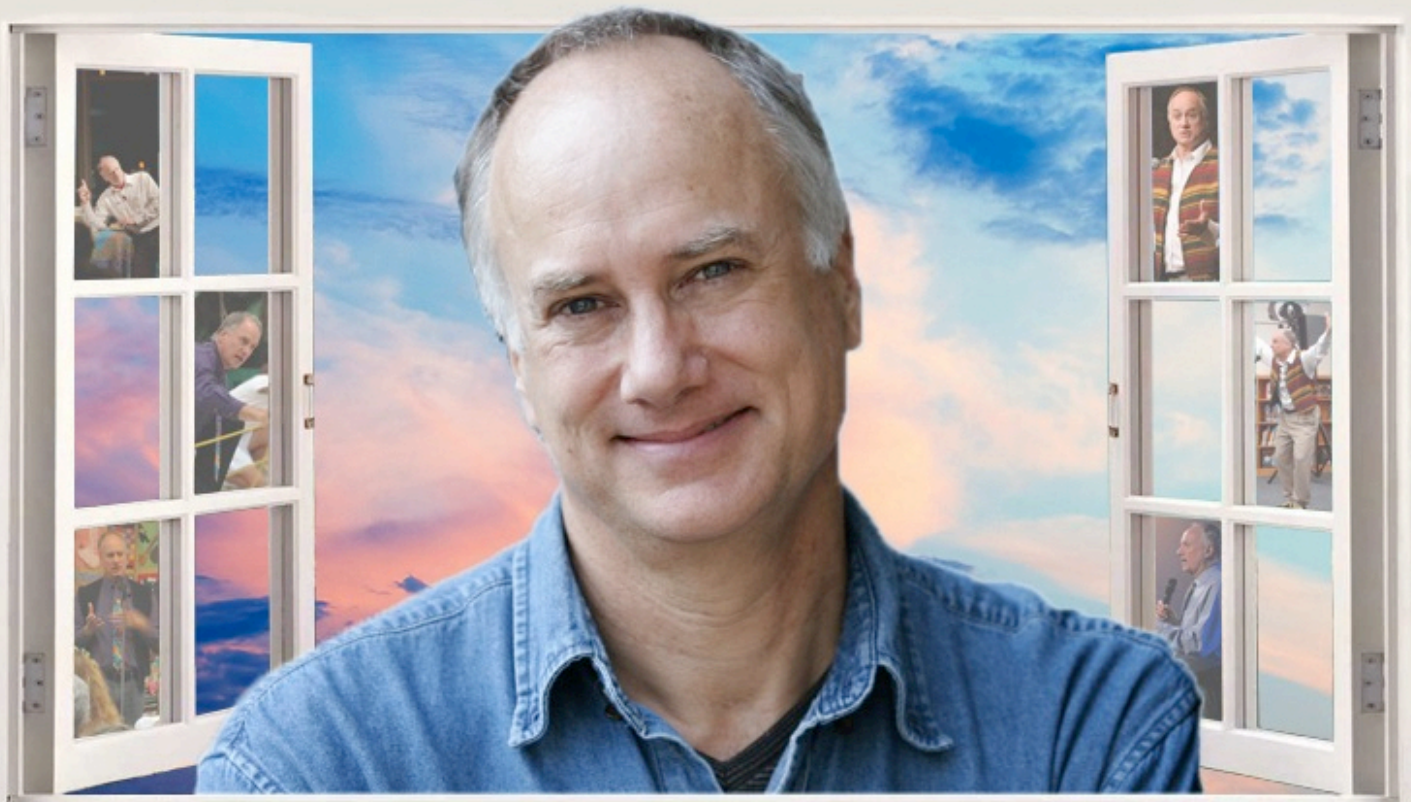


David Novak
is



finding ourselves with stories



atellingexperience.com

facebook.com/atellingexperience

atellingexperience.blogspot.com

Phone: 828.280.2718 (C)

Email: david@atellingexperience.com

*Telling stories is an exercise in imagining possibilities.
When we tell stories together, we find what is possible together.*



As I pursued my love of Theatre Arts, writing, designing, and acting, I began to tell stories. Public venues gave me incentive to invent, teaching me how to converse in my art. But the most impactful, passionate experience



that affected my art came with the birth of my son. A new sense of story began to grow. No longer was the telling of stories an instructional behavior, an entertainment, or a creative whimsy. Now it was an act of love.



Biography

“Storyteller David Novak is an on-stage wizard, spinning his tales with wild creativity, intelligence, and wit.”
Rapid River Magazine.

Highly prized for his ability to bring ancient tales, classic myths, and original stories to life and enthrall audiences of all ages, American storyteller, David Novak, is in demand for his stage concerts, school programs, keynotes, and workshops. Novak is recipient of the Circle of Excellence for storytelling, and the Aurand Harris Memorial Playwrighting Award for excellence in professional theatre for children. David’s 30+ year’s experience as a performing and teaching artist includes Master Storyteller for The Disney Company, The Lincoln Center Institute, L.A. Music Center, and featured storyteller for the National Storytelling Festival. His international appearances include the Singapore International StoryFest, Czech Children’s Theatre Festival, Sydney International Storytelling Conference, and international schools throughout China. David is an A+ Fellow for the NC Arts Council and a NC Wolf Trap Teaching Artist. David lives in Asheville, North Carolina.



“...a gifted teller who enhances his stories with a bag of tricks.” *Smithsonian Magazine*

Recent Tours*

2018-22 Wolf Trap Institute, Professional Development for Early Childhood Educators,
2016-22 A+ Schools NC
2021 Springboard to Learning, St. Louis, MO
2021 North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching
2021 United Arts Council, Raleigh NC
2021 Tobin Center, San Antonio, TX
2020 A Telling Experience, Eliot Institute, Seabeck, WA.
2019 R. Buckminster Fuller, Krakow, Poland
2019 Featured Artist, Singapore International Storytelling Festival
2019 The Death of Balder, Sydney, NSW.
2018 Gilgamesh. Sydney, NSW.
2018 Keynote, Sydney International Storytelling Institute. NSW.

2018 “Down By The Water.” Commission, UNC-Asheville, NC
2017 Teller In Residence. International Storytelling Center, Jonesborough, TN.
2017 The Storytellers’ Compass. Eliot Institute, Seabeck, WA.
2016 A Telling Experience,. Timpanogos Festival. Orem, UT,
2016 International Schools. Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong, Macao.
2016 Master Class. North Carolina Storyteller’s Guild, NC
2016 Keynote/Master Classes. Sydney Int’l Storytelling Conference, AU.
2016 Featured Artist. National Storytelling Festival, Jonesborough, TN..
2015 R. Buckminster Fuller, Wroclaw, Poland.
2015 Gilgamesh. Provincetown Playhouse, New York, NY.

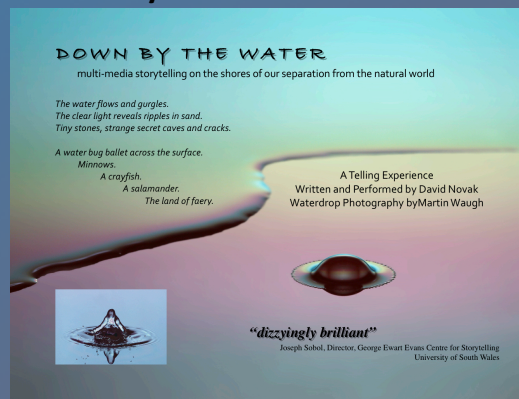
*Limited touring 2020-2022 due to COVID pandemic

On Stages

A Telling Experience On Stage

Solo storytelling-based works of theatre for venues with formal stages.

Down by the Water

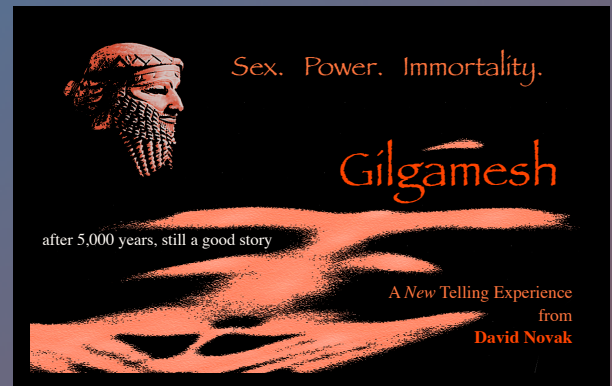


A multi-media performance exploring our disconnection from the natural world. Marine Geology, Medusae, and Selkies populate this eclectic mix of science and story. With water drop photography by Martin Waugh.

Hounded

Don't be afraid, be disturbed.

Spectral dogs, church grims, threshold guardians, and family phantoms.



“David Novak's telling of Gilgamesh at the Provincetown Playhouse yesterday was a gorgeous combination of storytelling, theatre and sharing of thoughts about the nature of human existence woven together with the ease of a master performer.”
—Regina Ress, *Producer of Storytelling Provincetown Playhouse, NY*



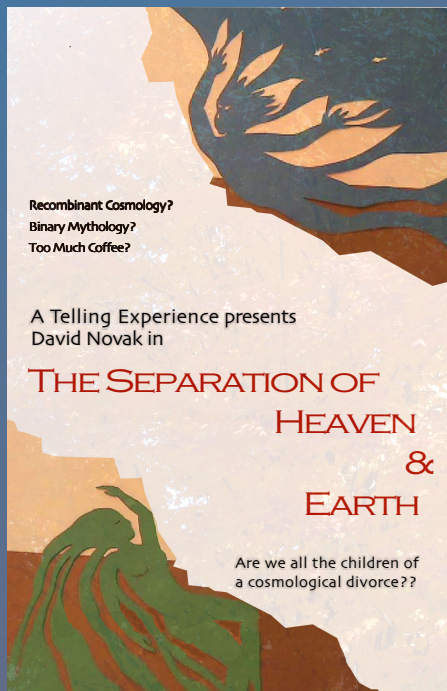
Chaste White & Blush Red

A combination of classic fairy tales, myths, and poetry asking:

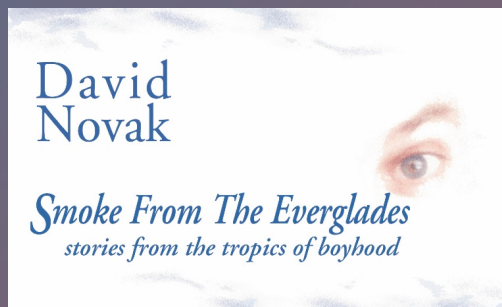
How can you know another until you know yourself?

How can you know yourself until you know another?



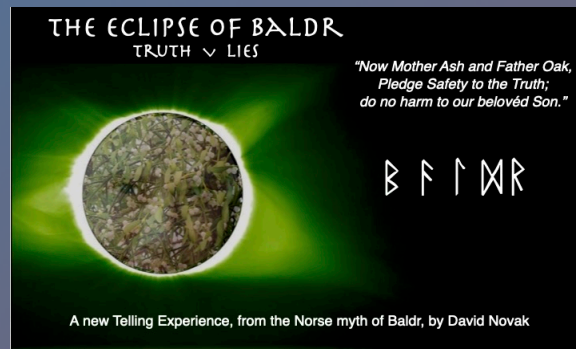


An enchanting discourse across world myth, cultural history and memoir.

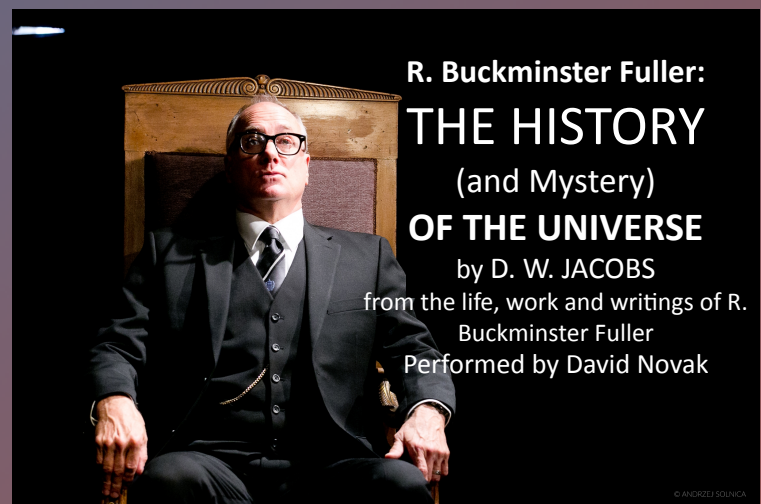


"It's a captivating coming-of-age story; mindful material, with a good deal of depth, and the fine talents of a super storyteller.

Novak was raised in Ft. Lauderdale and fondly remembers every nuance of his neighborhood and its denizens. He brings together all those strains into a coherent story that captures our imagination and leaves us most familiar with that area."



"I knew it would be great, but that was even more terrific than I imagined. The congregation loved you, as I knew they would. You are marvelous, thoughtful, engaging, and you are even great with Zoom!"



R. Buckminster Fuller: THE HISTORY (and Mystery) OF THE UNIVERSE

"I don't want to say that this is the best thing that ever happened at N.C. Stage, but I will be bold to declare it a most unique and unexpected triumph. I anticipated something sober, noble, serious and a little boring. What I got was an evening not only bountiful in itself, but one which is redefining what I expect from an experience in the theater. In the future I will expect to be awakened and informed and remade, not merely amused."



In Schools

SAMPLE Assembly Programs

Artist Background: When the truth reveals itself, we call it *A Telling Experience*. David Novak tells stories to enhance learning, engage emotion, and find common ground. A performing and teaching artist with the Lincoln Center Institute, L.A. Music Center, festivals and institutes across the nation. David's tours abroad include New Zealand, Asia, and the Czech Republic. A Master Storyteller for The Disney Institute, he was awarded the Circle of Excellence from the National Storytelling Network, and is often featured at the National Storytelling Festival. He has a background in arts education, theatre, and creative writing and is a published author and recording artist.

Space Requirements: A performance area of at least 10'x10'. Performance space to be protected from the elements.

Technical Requirements: Sound system to be provided by the Client (microphone on a stand, no podiums) where the space requires acoustic support or the audience exceeds 100. A stool, small table, and water are requested.

First Books

Program Abstract: With Finger Plays, Paper Folds, and Strings, David Novak shows how tellers made the first books.

Program Type: Performance

Grade Level: K-5

Artistic Discipline: Storytelling

Cultural Origin: African; Asian; European; Native American; Pacific Islander

Program Description: Books hold stories. Storytellers told stories with finger plays, rhyme schemes, or string figures, long before writing was invented. Your students will gain an expanded definition of Reading as a behavior that involves seeing and interpretation; define Books as devices for holding stories; see a variety of skills to make oral presentation engaging and informative. "First Books" includes a retelling of *Itsy Bitsy Spider* as an heroic epic, original finger plays, paper, and string stories. David draws a distinction between the story and the text. "Storytellers," he explains, "always had words. What they wanted to preserve was the memory of the story so they made books from hand gestures with finger plays, or wove a tale using string figures." His final story is his popular string figure retelling of *Jack and the Beanstalk*, also available as a picture book. Participation, physical and vocal histrionics, clever language, and creative use of objects engages all listeners.

The Storytellers' Fire

Program Abstract: A solo performance of many story types with original treatments of folklore, myth, and memoir.

Program Type: Performance

Grade Level: K-5

Artistic Discipline: Storytelling

Cultural Origin: African; Asian; European; Latino; Middle Eastern; Native American; Pacific Islander

Program Description: Listening to stories develops: emotional intelligence, pattern recognition, creative problem-solving, cultural awareness, and empathy for others. In both form and content, *The Storytellers' Fire* directly addresses Essential Standards in Theatre Arts and Common Core Standards for English Language Arts such as Key Ideas and Details; Craft and Structure; Phonological Awareness and Fluency. Students also explore core concepts in Science for Inquiry, Systems, Processes, and Change as they explore the natural world for ancient patterns that create new stories. A Telling Experience addresses The Revised Bloom's Taxonomy in Cognitive Processes such as Explaining and Inferring: Folk narratives abound with cause-and-effect plot structures such as the cumulative tale; in The Knowledge Dimension such as Conceptual Knowledge and Meta-Cognitive Knowledge. Careful selection of material, opportunities to participate, and the associations formed between stories involve the listener.

SAMPLE Residency, Workshop, Professional Development

Story Weaving

Program Abstract: Learn to create and “tie up” a story with creative storytelling and shoe strings!

Program Type: Workshop/Residency

Grade Level: 3+

Artistic Discipline: Storytelling

Cultural Origin: Multi

Program Description: David Novak will introduce students to the art of using string as a storytelling technique and demonstrate its use in a variety of traditional and original string stories. Students will participate in creative activities such as developing a story on a shoestring which requires teamwork, experimentation, evaluation, refining and presentation. Novak will introduce the use of string figures for the presentation of oral narratives in world cultures including African, Native American, Polynesian, Asian, and European. The residency culminates in a public presentation of student work.

Tally Up!

Program Abstract: This workshop combines Math with Language Arts using 'magic pictures' to practice story calculus.

Program Type: Workshop/Residency

Grade Level: 3-5

Artistic Discipline: STEM; Storytelling; Theatre; Visual Arts

Cultural Origin: None

Program Description: Writing of language and the recording of stories, emerged from tallying and record-keeping. Today, the word “tell” continues to mean “tally.” A Bank Teller, counts money; a Story Teller recounts events. They must both be able to manage various equations; the one involves numbers, the other involves narrative. Beginning with simple nursery rhymes then progressing through folk lore and literature, we learn to make effective stories while developing related mathematical skills. *Tally Up!* addresses Essential Standards in Theatre Arts and Common Core Standards for English Language Arts such as Key Ideas and Details; Craft and Structure; Phonological Awareness and Fluency. Students explore concepts in Science for Inquiry, Systems, Processes, and Change. *Tally Up!* addresses The Revised Bloom's Taxonomy in Cognitive Processes for Explaining and Inferring with cause-and-effect plot structures such as the chain story.

Tell Me About It: A Telling Experience in Learning

Program Abstract: A professional development workshop on applications of storytelling skills in the classroom.

Program Description: Storyteller and Teaching Artist, David Novak, shares strategies for integrating storytelling and oral-ity into classroom curricula. The Telling Experience develops: emotional intelligence, pattern recognition, creative problem-solving, cultural awareness, and empathy for others. Storytelling directly addresses Essential Standards in Theatre Arts and Common Core Standards for English Language Arts such as Key Ideas and Details; Craft and Structure; Phonological Awareness and Fluency. In an integral curriculum, storytelling can facilitate exposure to core concepts in Science for Inquiry, Systems, Processes, and Change by exploring the natural world for narrative patterns. A Telling Experience nurtures Cognitive Processes such as Explaining and Inferring; Conceptual and Meta-Cognitive Knowledge. This workshop presents a number of “Story Mind” activities to develop awareness and language skills for describing, explaining, and expressing.

"In him, The Brothers Grimm and Carl Jung meet Monty Python."

Jeannine Pasini Beekman, Houston Storytelling Festival

"He tells his stories with great physical awareness, a real sense of suspense, humor, and integrity. His range, personality, warmth, truthfulness, imagination, ability to transform, taste, all combined, make him a unique artist."

June Dunbar, Artistic Director, Lincoln Center Institute

"Novak, a gifted teller who regularly performs at festivals around the country, enhances his stories with a bag of tricks. His fluid voice can become a dozen different characters. He sometimes takes out a looped string and turns cat's cradle tangles into antlers, beards and other costumes for his protagonists."

Smithsonian magazine

"David Novak embodies the definition of the word creative. He is an entirely original storyteller whose tales are inventions of his imagination or original adaptations of classic fables or myths. A trained theatre professional, David uses his skills as an actor and director to bring his stories into the third dimension. His expertise in the art of mime and circus techniques allows him to transform everyday objects and simple props into magical uses for his storytelling. His keen artistic eye is always at work, carefully selecting the theatrical and literary elements of his program. It is this selectivity which separates the art from the craft and the primary artist from a merely interpretive one. Dave is that primary artist in the truest sense."

Stylistically, his work is characterized by a strong and expressive physicality and a voice that is agile and clear as a bell. He possesses a combination of flexibility and control and an intuitive ability to pace himself and work with his audience."

Barbara Leonard, Artistic Director, LA Music Center On Tour

"A unique artist possessing one of the most exciting storytelling talents seen in America"

fyi. Honolulu, HI

"You have to see Novak in action to understand why he can make a living by telling stories. He might be a stonecutter one moment, an emperor or a mountain or a cloud the next. He glides from a Giant's gruff baritone to a woman's falsetto in an instant, flowing in and out of divergent characters with ease."

Register-Guard. Eugene, OR

"The session is over quickly. Too quickly for the children, who have been suspended in time, held by the voice and considerable talents of the storyteller. Practice makes perfect, they say, and judging from Mr. Novak's performance, he must have told a great many stories indeed."

Homer News. Homer, Alaska

"I found his work with the teachers to be outstanding. He was meticulous in planning teaching units with them, including step-by-step analysis of skills in storytelling. As a result, the teachers have had the confidence to continue his work without hesitation."

Principal, Hope School, Carlsbad, CA

A TELLING EXPERIENCE!



I TAKE THE BUSINESS OF TELLING STORIES SERIOUSLY.

LISTENING TO STORIES DEVELOPS:



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
PATTERN RECOGNITION
CULTURAL AWARENESS
PROBLEM-SOLVING
EMPATHY

When asked:
What would you tell other schools about your experience
with the program and interaction with the artist?
Here's what teachers have to say:

Great Storyteller.
He was engaging and so fun to watch

I recommend this artist whole-heartedly.

He is very positive and professional. He did a great job with a large crowd but I bet it would be even better in a smaller setting.

He was very nice and did a great job.

The artist is simple but effective, sharing traditions from a variety of cultures.

Kept the students attention. Great presence on stage with the students.

Great. Lively. Funny. Fun.



Highly recommend. Very engaging storyteller, pleasant to work with and flexible with programming

Very professional and great storyteller!

He was very entertaining.

It was a wonderful program!

Very easy to work with. Adapts program to different age groups very carefully.



*David enchants students at
Western Academy of Beijing.*

How storytelling became David Novak's tool for activism

Brailey Sheridan
Contributor
bsherida@unca.edu

David Novak, the founder of A Telling Experience and itinerant storyteller, spent many years exploring how we separate heaven and earth and its impact on our use of Earth's resources.

He now brings his findings to the stage at UNC Asheville's Arts Fest 2018 through storytelling.

"As a storyteller, I really want to explore the mythic implications of what we are doing in the present day, especially in terms of environmental degradations," Asheville resident Novak said. "Why, for example, if we know the facts and we have all this data about climate change, environmental toxicity, global warming and issues like that, why is this data not compelling enough to get us into action?"

Arts Fest 2018 takes place April 5 through 7.

The three-day festival will showcase about 30 events, according to the artistic director of Arts Fest, Laura Bond. This year's events center

around the theme of intersections within the arts as a way to create community through the arts, she said.

"It's a way of welcoming the community onto the campus and bringing people together because the arts have such a great way of bringing people together. That's why our subtitle is 'Creating community through the arts,'" said Bond, a professor of interdisciplinary studies and drama.

Novak began his storytelling career as a child in the theater. He later obtained a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in directing and moved to St. Louis. While there, he began presenting programs of stories for schools as part of educational outreach for the Theatre Project Company, Novak said.

"I would start out as an actor acting like a storyteller depending on the genre I was trying to teach if I was telling tall tales or something like that," the teaching artist said.

According to Novak, it was not until a storytelling festival at the Museum of Westward Expansion in St. Louis that he found an intersection between all of his passions and turned storytelling into his career. "I began to find that it was an assimilation and integration of all my various skills as a theater artist because it was a field in which I was the director, the designer and the performer and so it felt like a good fit. It was the first time I felt like I had a career that integrated all my interests," said



David Novak, founder of A Telling Experience, said storytelling is a powerful way to connect with one another. Photo by Brailey Sheridan

Novak, an adjunct professor in the storytelling department at East Tennessee State University. Novak said he considers himself to be a creative or revivalist storyteller as opposed to a tradition bearer. He said as an American he does not want to misrepresent the cultures where these stories originated, but rather interpret them for his current audience and their culture.

"My cultural background is the theater arts and that's an eclectic art form. That gives me permission, in a sense, to range in a lot of different ways," Novak said. "I range from the nursery rhyme to the epic myth. I have an interest in classical and folkloric material and I also have an interest in creative writing so I tend to find my own interpretive voice in what I do."

Today, Novak said his life consists of a patchwork of many different responsibilities. In addition to the time he spends traveling, practicing and performing at different venues around the United States and abroad, Novak also tends to his duties as a father and husband.

"It's a very project-oriented lifestyle. I'm also a home husband and when I'm home I am not only creating and crafting but also taking care of everybody as best I can," Novak said.

Novak shared his stories at UNCA in the past during multiple Humanities 124 common lectures. According to Novak, during these lectures, he used music and drama to bring ancient poems and epics to life for the audience.

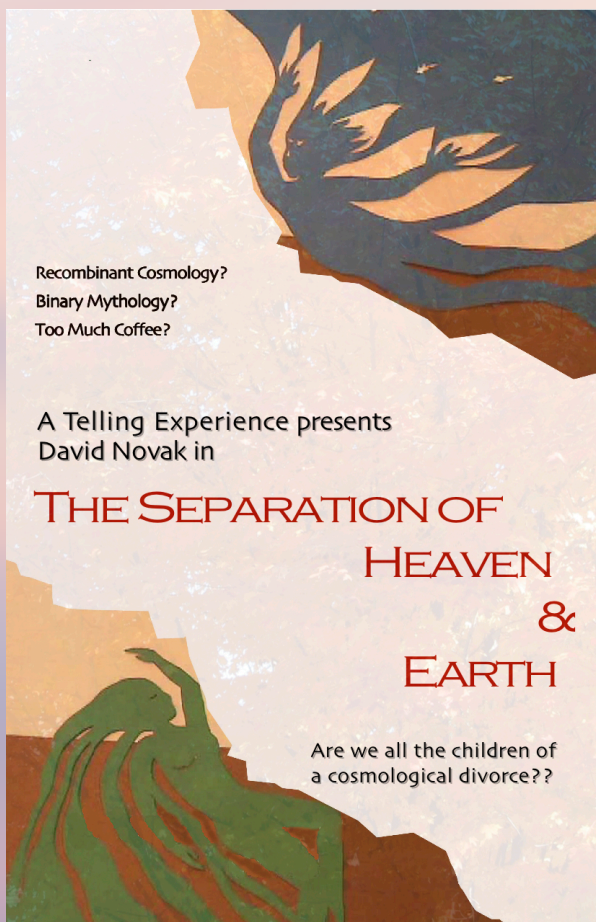
"Personally I thought his storytelling was quite captivating especially with his use of an instrument. He really kept his audience's attention with body language and his tone while telling the stories and using props," junior new media student Santiago Bonilla said about Novak's performance on campus earlier this semester.

Novak returns this week to UNCA for Arts Fest, along with other artists from around UNCA, the community and globe. Novak said he will focus on how people interpret stories about the separation of Heaven and Earth and how that impacts public discourse, especially in regards to why people allow environmental degradation.

"I think the answer lies somewhere in the cosmology and the mythic stories that we live by. If you believe, for example, that heaven is the place you desire to be and Earth is some kind of living hell, where you don't want to be, naturally you won't be focused on the degradation of the earth, you're gonna be more focused on some other pie in the sky, or afterlife," Novak said.

Novak said his ideas for Arts Fest exist as an outgrowth of a larger opus of art he has produced over the course of many years. His job and art form leave a lot of uncertainty, but he says he lives an integral life, one where who he is and what he does are very closely related.

"Life is art and art is life and that's what I like about it," he said.





Mr. Novak,
Thank you so much for coming to
Echo Hill and performing for the
students & staff! The whole school had
been anticipating your arrival (anxiously!)
since the day they first learned about
you! I haven't stopped hearing about
how fantastic your performances were,
and I have to agree with them!
You have been, hands down, the best
visiting author/illustrator we have
EVER had at Linn-Mar! I've never
seen our students so engaged, they
absolutely loved you!

Thank you again, and
we hope to see you again
soon!

Bobbie Hingo
Echo Hill Elementary
Marion, IA

