

A stinky ogre's tale

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The magic words are "apple strudel."

Marissa Fosberg galloped around the Stagestruck building shouting the words.

The 6-year-old takes her role as Shrek very seriously.

Shrek is disgusting. He stinks. It was said he is uglier than both of his parents combined.

And this week, he came alive -- courtesy of the Stagestruck Storytellers.

The summer theater camp's big debut was Friday -- in front of family and friends.

It was the end result of a week of practicing -- or wrangling -- for the play's producers, Caylee Crumpton and Hallie Hulse.

Twelve children, ranging in age from 3 to 6 worked on the play all week. They made their own costumes from burlap, poster board and some creativity, and they have even worked on their stage blocking.

During Wednesday's rehearsal, being a producer meant helping with lines and calming stage fright.

Marissa has performed before. She says she got nervous and very scared the first time, and only liked being a thespian a little bit, but that is not keeping her from lighting up the stage again.

"I'm good at performing in front of Mommy," she said. "I like seeing Mommy, and I like dancing. I'm an artist."

On Wednesday evening, she put her artistic talents to work and helped decorate her costume.

"I want glitter all over," she said.

That does not make her Shrek mask any less terrifying. The mere sight of it causes 5-year-old Adam Livengood -- performing as a peasant -- to faint during the play.

"The sparkles are just pimples," she said.

Her parents promised to be front and center at her performance.

"Mommy and Daddy keep saying they can't wait," she said.

The witch, Ellisyn Rogers, is a little shy.

"You don't have to say your lines if you don't want to," Hallie said to her.

So Ellisyn just stirred her cauldron.

Ava Slocum, 5, plays a very fearsome dragon, guarding the castle that holds Princess Fiona, played by 4-year-old Laila Jones.

"Roooooaaarrrrr," she yells when Marissa taps her shoulder.

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 Full Size



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Laila Jones, 4, breaks character as she waves to her grandmother Maria McCall and aunt Miyah McCall during the Storytellers summer camp production of "Shrek" at StageStruck Friday. Laila was playing Princess Fiona.

She says she can breathe fire.

"It's not real though," she promised.

Caylee says it is a fun group to work with.

"They are adorable," she said. "They have such big personalities."

She has been involved in the theater her entire life and spent the spring semester interning at Stagestruck.

"At first everyone was shy," she said. "They didn't want to say goodbye to mom and dad. Now they're like, 'Bye, see you later.'"

Stagestruck manager Tammy Lee watched the practice, laughing at the children's antics.

"This is a very well-behaved -- can I say mature -- group," she said.

Hallie narrates the play, and each child speaks their lines and acts when Shrek visits them along the journey.

But when the final bows were taken Friday night, all that mattered was that everyone had a good time.

And the audience rewarded the young thespians with lots of applause -- and hugs and kisses.

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