

Professional Storyteller *Estelle Condra to perform at Lincoln Center in New York*

Nationally known storyteller, Estelle Condra, has been invited to tell her unique stories at the Lincoln Center in New York City on July 16. After her performance in the Opera House in Rockport, Maine, as one of the featured storytellers of the North Atlantic Storytelling Festival, at the end of June, she will go to New York.

Although not a native of Carrollton, Estelle endeared herself in the hearts of many while she and her husband, David, resided in this city. She began the first acting studio for children here, which was very successful; she wrote and directed "White Warrior", an outdoor drama presented during the county's bicentennial celebration in 1976, and performed and participated in many community and civic activities.

In a letter to the Creative Living editor of this newspaper she says, "I have not forgotten my good friends in Carrollton. Since I have been living in Nashville (three years) my career has developed in a different direction and I have found many fulfilling opportunities as a professional storyteller. Meaning that I do a sort of 'one-woman-show' all over the country. Whatever it is that I am doing it is working and I am loving it."

A native of South Africa, Estelle has been producing, directing, writing and teaching in this country for the last nine years. Three years ago, she decided to become a full time performer and teller of stories for children and adults alike. Because of her background and education in the art of oral interpretation, she was an instant success. She is a high style, high quality artist who presents literature in story form. Her performances include works from famous writers, such as Somerset Maugham, Guy De Maupassant, Saki, Shakespeare, Shaw, Anouilh and Euripides.

Her most unique works are her South African Tribal Tales. These stories have never been written down, but have been passed down orally through many generations. They come from the Xhosa, Venda, Sotho and Zulu tribes and many of them have never before been told in English.

She casts a magic spell upon the audience as she takes them away into the jungle with the beating of the tribal drum and primitive song and dance. Stories of spine-tingling hunting expeditions and horrible witch doctors make young and old sit up.

Estelle has produced a South African Tribal Tales cassette series for use in schools and libraries and has produced over 100 hours of radio story programs for public radio.

It was because of her excellent work and unique material that she has come to the attention of many art directors around the country. Invitations stream in inviting her to perform or lecture throughout the United States as well as her native South Africa.

From June 14—23, she will be working with the Nashville Institute for the Arts, telling her Tribal Tales and literary stories to students of the arts on the Vanderbilt campus. On June 24, she will depart for Rockport, Me, where she will be one of the six featured storytellers at a three day storytellers festival.

Estelle is a member of the Nashville Storytelling League and the National Storytelling League.



ESTELLE CONDRA

"My work is versatile", Estelle says, "and I like to show it. I like to transfer my audiences to far away places. One time I will take them to dine with me in Paris at an elegant restaurant or I will take them hunting, stalking game in the Kalahari Desert, or I'll take them to Salt Lake City after a nuclear attack. The stories that I will do here are primarily for adults. I enjoy doing my adult work. I like to stir my audiences, provoke them, make them come alive, and put them in touch with their true emotions."

Concerning her workshop for teachers Estelle says, "Storytelling is going to encourage a lot of children to read and that is the main purpose. Apart from educational purposes, it is entertaining and broadens the individual outlook. With tales of history and cultures they don't know of, people's perspectives will broaden."

On July 16, Estelle will be on stage at the Julliard Theatre in the Lincoln Center telling her South African Tribal Tales. Her audience will consist of educators and members of the arts community from New York City and surrounding areas. This will be part of a six week art study series presented by the Lincoln Institute for the Arts. Other performing artists and their works will be studied also. "They are planning to showcase my work at the Center, so I'll do a variety of styles and techniques for children and adults. My story program will be called 'From the Dungfires'. I am excited over this opportunity," said the storyteller.

Estelle Condra also is working on a book in collaboration with two other authors, dealing with anthologies of folkloric stories and techniques and methods of communicating them.