

Cinderabbit

A Family Musical for Puppets or Live Actors

*Book and Lyrics by Mimi Bean Evenden
Music and Arrangements by C. Michael Perry
Additional Arrangements by Karen Null Coates*

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PUBLISHED BY
ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING
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STORY OF THE PLAY

This colorful retelling of the classic Cinderella fairy tale features delightful animal characters including shy Prince Richard, the Rabbit-Hearted, and Princess Tabitha of the Blue Mountain Grove. It seems that when the Grove burned down years ago, Tabitha's parents left her as an infant on the doorstep of the Bugmerks, a family of toads on the edge of the Great Grey Swamp. Mother Bugmerk and her daughters, Merklene and Bogelda, make life miserable for our Tabitha. She must wait on them hand and foot, and is forced to sleep in the furnace room, thus they call her "Cinderabbit." Thankfully, her close friend and confidant Mercedes, a mouse living in the Bugmerks' dwelling, makes life bearable. The night of the prince's ball arrives and the Bugmerks leave poor Cinderabbit behind. And who appears? Gracie, Cinderabbit's Jewish Fairy Pigmother, who sends Tabitha off to the ball. And then the adventure and romance begin!

Performance time: 40-45 minutes.

When filmed as a television puppet-musical for PBS by KBYU-TV in Provo, Utah this musical won a "Best of West" award and an Emmy award. The BYU Children's Book Review gave "Cinderabbit" an A- rating: "The dialog is funny...its strength lies in the visual aspect...A very strong effort."

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 m, 5 w, and numerous flexible roles)

CINDERABBIT: Born Tabitha Rabbit of the Blue Mountain Grove, she was brought to the Great Grey Swamp as a baby, the night her kingdom burned. Reared by the Bugmerks as shirrtail poor relation, she's adjusted to her role. Quick to forgive, slow to think of herself.

PRINCE RICHARD, THE RABBIT-HEARTED: The local ruler, an organized, sensitive young rabbit who, due to a bad experience in his youth, has never spoken to a girl. Realizing something has to be done, he invites every girl in his kingdom to a ball.

FURD: Richard's first attendant; a buck-toothed, extremely nearsighted beaver. He's loyal and lonely.

EMILIA BUGMERK: Our villain toad stepmother. She has a malicious temper; a selfish, spiteful nature; and a great deal of physical strength. She resents Cinderabbit and wants to control others.

MERKLENE BUGMERK: The oldest toad stepsister, has never adjusted to being short and round. As a result, she has a passion for food and attention. She sports an obnoxious giggle and a universe revolving around herself.

BOGELDA BUGMERK: A good sort; well-read, but sleepy and slow. No one listens to her. Her only real passion is reading while in her hot mud bath. Bogelda and Furd are the ideal couple: neither one speaks much. They are idyllically happy.

MERCEDES MOUSE: A young male who lives in the swamp with Cinderabbit for want of a better place or someone who wants him. He helps Rabbit with her work, being extremely careful not to be seen or caught by Mother Bugmerk.

GRACIE, THE FAIRY PIGMOTHER: Although somewhat New York/cosmopolitan, she has the giving nature fairy pigmothers need, and the sense of humor that gets them through fairy tales. She and Emilia grew up in the same barnyard. Gracie knew Tabitha's parents to the extent of being named her fairy pigmother.

MR. CRISPIN: Richard's second attendant: A squirrel with a slight lateral lisp. He loves his job; the hobnobbing without the pressures.

KARL-HEINZ: (*Flexible*) Has been the Royal Cook for generations. S/He is a small German mole, very well versed in green things and rooty things; never heard of sugar; loves his work.

STERLING BRATTON: (*Optional character.*) A large distinguished newscaster chicken. He affects glasses and a watch on a chain, but he calls them as he sees them. He's been asked to narrate this show due to the controversial potential of the "Did She or Didn't She Try On the Slipper?" approach. Sterling enjoys controversy. This show is somewhat of a kick, but he's playing it for its image value.

Additional Smaller Roles Going to or Attending the Ball
(*Some Roles Could Be Doubled*)

PHILLY: A water rat, gondola-taxi-driver. He is not polite to ladies, does not like to be kept waiting. (Has one line.)

CAMILLE: A real foxy lady.

ALPHABET: One half of the Corps De Pork dancers. She dances en point, in a lavender tutu.

BOARIS: Alphabet's partner and her brother. He feels a little silly, but the pay is good.

ADDITIONAL ANIMALS: Attendees at the ball such as boy and girl cats, chicken, etc.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

- Scene 1:** Bugmerk home and mud baths.
- Scene 2:** Prince Richard's solarium the morning of the ball.
- Scene 3:** Bugmerk mud baths the day of the ball.
- Scene 4:** Palace kitchen after the ball has begun.
- Scene 5:** Palace gondola dock minutes later.
- Scene 6:** The ballroom and other places in the castle.
- Scene 7:** The Bugmerk home and Richard's solarium.
- Scene 8:** The Bugmerk mud baths the next morning.

SYNOPSIS OF MUSICAL NUMBERS

- #1 Cinderabbit!** ... *Cinderabbit, Mother, Merklene, Bogelda*
- #2 Stuck!***Richard, Furd*
- #3 We Three Queens**...*Mother, Merklene, Bogelda*
- #4 Zap!***Gracie, Cinderabbit, Mercedes*
- #5 Thousands of Ladies**..*Richard, Karl-Heinz, Mother*
- #6 Underscore**
- #7 Zap! (Reprise)**.....*Gracie, Cinderabbit*
- #8 Underscore**
- #9 Cinderabbit Waltz**...*Company*
- #10 Not For Me / Momentarily Mine**...*Cinderabbit, Richard*
- #11 Feet!**.....*Richard, Furd, Mercedes*
- #12 Underscore**
- #13 Curtain Call***Company*

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Prologue

(AT RISE: Typical newscaster desk. Seated is our host, STERLING BRATTON. SFX: Timpani roll.)

STERLING: *(Mature newscaster voice.)* Good evening. The story behind the Cinderella story, like all classic fantasies, is elusive. An extremely imaginative research team has recently released a report on the subject. The following is a dramatization of that report.

Scene 1

(SFX: On the cymbal crash the LIGHTS come up on the pump area of the Bugmerk home. It has a garbage heap, large furnace, pipes and tree roots. MERCEDES' head pops out of a pipe; CINDERABBIT'S head pops out of another pipe.)

MERCEDES: Cinderabbit? You ready?

CINDERABBIT: Right here, Mercedes! Let's get this furnace going!

MERCEDES: *(Descending into pipe.)* Right!

CINDERABBIT: Three, two, one – Hit it!

(CINDERABBIT disappears down her pipe. As confetti issues from the smokestack the bellows begin pumping and the wheel begins to turn. The rhythm of the pump follows the bass line of the music.)

MUSICAL # 1 – CINDERABBIT!

CINDERABBIT: *(Entering on the run.)* We did it! The furnace is working! Mercedes!

MERCEDES: *(Popping out of a pipe.)* You bellowed?

CINDERABBIT: Are you OK?

MERCEDES: *(Nods.)* Lot of work here just to make hot mud.

End of Freeview

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