Just So Stories

Based on the book by Rudyard Kipling

Adaptation and lyrics by R. Rex Stephenson

Music and additional lyrics by Emily Rose Tucker

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This musical was originally produced June 28-July 1, 2005 by the Blue Ridge Dinner Theatre in Ferrum, Virginia. The original cast included:

Director: R. Rex Stephenson
Music Director: Emily Rose Tucker
Choreographer: R. Carter Cox
Performance Pianist: Fair Robey
Rudyard Kipling: Joe Ray
Caroline Kipling: Jody D. Brown
Josephine Kipling: Chandra Diesel
Elsie Kipling: Emily Rose Tucker
Camel, Elephant, Child, Goldfish: Maria Alegre
Horse, Crocodile, Strange Man, Narrator: Michael Antico
Djinn, Narrator, Mother: Catherine Baggs
Camel, Zebra, Whale, Head Chief, Horse: Giuseppe DiMeo
Dog, Snake, Neolithic Lady: Kara Dunne
Camel, Snake, Whate, T. Bopsulai, Man: Dustin Johnson
Ox, Elephant Mother, T. Tewindrow: Nicole Sanderson
First Assistant to the Vice-Chief's Deputy: Blake Allen
Mouse: Kane Allen
Baboon: Taylor Allen
Man, Giraffe, Vice-Chief: Zach Allen
Chorus: Abigail Ardis, Kelly Bennett
Deputy Vice-Chief: Dakotah Kelly
Neolithic Lady: Amelia Pagans
Chorus: McKenzie Prillaman, Casey Robertson
Snake, Neolithic Lady: Brittany Stone
Chorus: Arthur Stump, Blaire Stump, Cheryl Stump
Emma, Narrator: Ruth Trochim
Giraffe: Drew Turner
Baboon, Neolithic Lady: Kasey Winnemuth
Snake: Kaitlin Wray

Production crew included:
Rehearsal Pianist, Austin Robey; Lights, Juliet Stephenson;
Costumes, Martha Stephenson, Faye Prillaman, BRDT Company;
Scenic Artist, Kara Dunne; Box Office, Abigail Ardis, Melisa Allen;
Usher Coordinator, Ruth Jones.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Kipling's dramatic and entertaining stories about how the Camel got its hump, how the Elephant got his nose, how the Whale got his spout, and other richly woven tales come to life in this engaging musical. Mr. and Mrs. Kipling and their two bubbly yet unpretentious daughters serve as narrators. The story weaves from animal tales to a human one, how Man—or in this case an enterprising young girl!—wrote the first letter. Especially engaging is the two-person whale which is a great theatrical device. The show opens with the song, "When the World Was Brand New," and features other humorous and rhythmic tunes as "The Whale With a Whale of an Appetite," "An Elongated Nose that Looks Like a Hose," and "Firstest Friends." Easy to produce, this whimsical musical is sure to charm everyone.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The simpler the setting, the better. A large drop with "Just So Stories" painted on it and original student artwork inspired from animals in the play will suffice for scenery. Several platforms scattered about would add variety and also make it easier for a director in staging a large cast.

The water the Great Djinn creates in the desert is simply a long roll of blue material brought in by several actors and stretched across the stage. The Great Djinn's magic carpet could well be flown down from a flyspace, however, four actors can carry the Djinn on a carpet stapled to a piece of ¾-inch plywood.

The "deer skin" in "How The First Letter Was Written," requires a bit of preparation by the actress portraying Taffy. Naturally, it has to be pre-painted, however, if the actress carefully unfolds the deer skin one section at a time, and she is drawing with her back to the audience, and the Strange Man is in a similar position, the audience will never see the full picture until it is hung on the trees.

SCENES AND CHARACTERS

Act I

The Kipling Family*
Rudyard Kipling (storyteller)
Caroline Kipling (wife)
Josephine (eldest daughter)
Elsie (younger daughter)

How The Camel Got His Hump
Camel
Horse
Dog
Ox
Man
Djinn

How The Elephant Got His Trunk
Betty (a narrator)
Emma (a narrator)
Elephant Child
Giraffe
Baboon 1
Baboon 2
Mother Elephant
Zebra
Snake
Crocodile

How The Whale Got His Spout
Whale (2 actors)
Goldfish

Act II

How The First Letter Was Written
Accompanist (non-speaking)
Tegumai
Teshumai
Taffy
Trees (1-3 actors)
Strange Man
Neolithic Ladies (1, 2, 3 & 4)
Head Chief
Vice Chief
Deputy Vice Chief
Assistant Deputy Vice Chief
Warriors and Extras
Reporter

How the Cat Became Friendly But Not Family
Michael (a narrator)
Wild Man
Woman
Horse
Dog
Cat (Josephine)
Cow
Baby (Elsie)
Mouse

Also:
Extras as desired.
Sailor (female)

This musical can be done with as few as 14 people by eliminating one Baboon and the three Assistant Chiefs. With the exception of Kipling, Man and Tegumai, the rest of the cast can be women.

**As narrators, Kipling family members weave in and out of all the scenes.*

SYNOPSIS OF SONGS

ACT I

Overture
"When the World Was Brand New" … Chorus
"What Shall We Do?" … Ox, Dog, Horse
"The Camel's Hump" … Chorus
"An Elongated Nose That Looks Like a Hose" …
Elephant Child and Mother, Snake, Zebra, Crocodile
"The Whale With a Whale of an Appetite" …
Whale 1 and 2, Fish
"The Whale With a Whale of an Appetite" – Reprise …
Whale 1 & 2, Fish
"Honest Serving Men" … Chorus

ACT II

"Honest Serving Men" – Reprise … Chorus
"I Fish With My Dad" … Taffy, Tegumai Bopsulai
"War Now" … Men
"Muh-un-wa-kee Exit" … All
"I Sing a Song of Welcome" Part 1 … Woman, Chorus
"I Sing a Song of Welcome" Part 2 … Woman, Chorus
"Cat Lullaby" … Cat, Chorus, Baby
"Firstest Friends" … Cat and Family
"The Whale With a Whale of an Appetite" … Curtain Call

PERCUSSION
SOUND EFFECTS

Sound effects used in the original production, and called for by the script include: tambourine, slapstick, wood block, cowbell, kazoos (3), slide whistle, ratchet and vibraslap. The original production also used hand drums, a cabasa, and maracas. Other small percussion instruments may be used to create sound effects as well, and to accompany the chanting of the "War Dance."

End of Freeview

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