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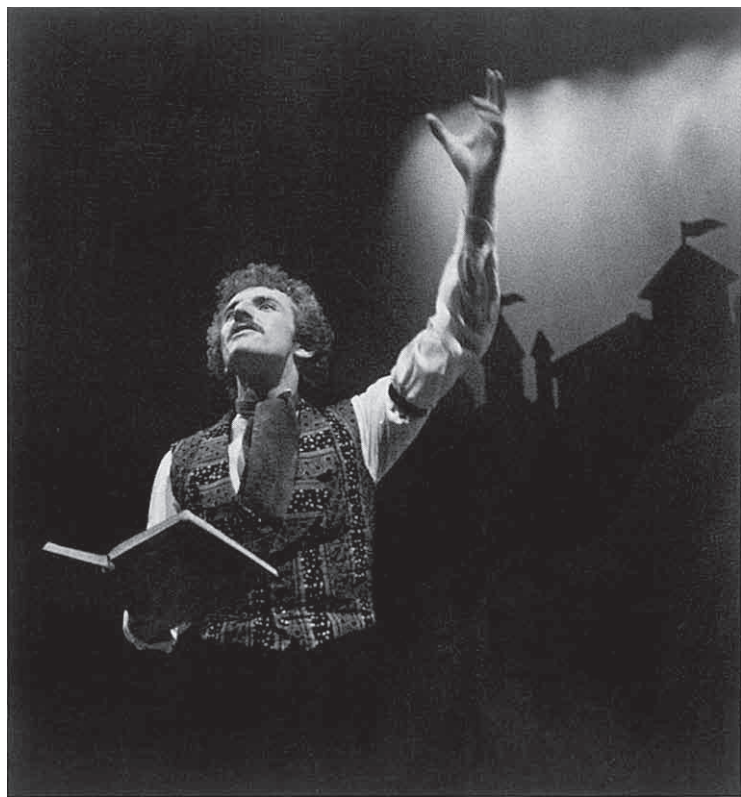
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Dramatic Publishing

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz



Adapted by
V. Glasgow Koste

From the book by
L. Frank Baum



The Dramatic Publishing Company

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

This marvelous play based on L. Frank Baum's original "wonder tale," *THE WIZARD OF OZ* continues to be a beloved part of our folk tradition. Faithful to the 1900 original, the play creates a fresh framework for OZ which glorifies theatre as a medium and books as a birthright worth cherishing. This adaptation of his tale illuminates human values: the importance of mind and heart and the silliness of trying to separate them; courage as facing what is feared; the need to dream, to dare, to ride out storms as a condition of survival; the joys of loving, laughing, crying, being lost ... and found.

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THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ

by

V. Glasgow Koste



The Dramatic Publishing Company
Woodstock, Illinois • Wilton, Connecticut • Melbourne, Australia

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(THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ)

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THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ

A Full Length Play
For 4 or more Men, 3 or more Women

CHARACTERS

FRANK BAUM Stage Manager, Narrator, Wizard
THE STAGEHAND
DOROTHY
UNCLE HENRY (doubles as GUARDIAN)
AUNT EM (doubles as WITCH of the WEST)
TOTO
MUNCHKINS*
GOOD WITCH of the NORTH (doubles as GLINDA),
 Good Witch of the South
SCARECROW
TIN WOODMAN
COWARDLY LION
WINKIES*

*Any number can play! In the original production, seven of each were cast. Far fewer, or more, can effectively be used, depending on whether a small company is involved or a large number wish to participate. Doubling is practical if desired. In an adult cast, children can effectively play the parts of Dorothy, Toto, Munchkins and Winkies, and a cast of seven adult actors could carry the other principal roles.

TIME: 1900—summer—by the calendar, and “Other Time” inside a child’s mind and in the Realm of Fantasy.

PLACE: The great Kansas prairie and the Land of Oz.

THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ premiered at The Eastern Michigan University Theatre with the following cast:

THE STAGE MANAGER/BAUM/WIZARD OF OZ

	Bobb James
STAGEHAND	Paul Brohan
DOROTHY	Hollie Frick
TOTO	Tod Barker
AUNT EM	Sally McNamara
UNCLE HENRY	Marvin Miller
THE GOOD WITH OF THE NORTH	Paula Kline
THE SCARECROW	Tim Monision
THE TIN WOODMAN	Phil Walker
THE COWARDLY LION	Dale Foren
THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATES	Dominic Depofe
THE WICKED WITCH OF THE WEST	Theresa McElwee
GLINDA THE GOOD	Sandara Herron
WINKIES	Rick Zemke, Heidi Cowing, Gerri Gushman, Mark Loeb, Kate McElya, Jaime Weiser, Kathi Aron,
MUNCHKINS	Tara Egnor, Jeramy Evans, John Holkeboer, Kristen Joseph, Scott McCloud, Larissa Simms, Hannah Yager

Dramatized and Directed by V. Glasgow Koste
Scenery, Lighting Design and Technical Direction

P. George Bird
Costume Design and Supervision Katherine Holkeboer

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

SCENE ONE

The Kansas Scene: Home

SCENE TWO

The Land of Oz, Munchkin Country

SCENE THREE

Beginning of The Quest: The Scarecrow

SCENE FOUR

**Questing Further: The Tin Woodman and
Cowardly Lion**

SCENE FIVE

**The Emerald City:
Requests to a Questionable Wizard**

SCENE SIX

**The West Country of the Winkies:
Vanquishing a Vanishing Witch**

SCENE SEVEN

**Return to Oz: Disbelief, Belief; Disillusion, Illusion;
Finding Out, Finding**

HOME FREE

**If an intermission is desirable, it comes between
Scenes 5 and 6.**

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING about *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

“Our residents had a wonderful time performing this play. We have received comments that this was the best play we had ever done. So thanks for a great script!”

*Lori Parker,
The Baddour Center,
Senatobia, Miss.*

“*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* allows the cast and audience to interface between the fantasy of the story and the author. It is a great vehicle for intergenerational casts. Our cast ranged in age from 2nd grade to 11th grade. The audience rated the show the best ever at Mercer.”

*Kay Herring,
North Mercer RIII School,
Mercer, Mo.*

“The Wizard of Oz with an original and creative viewpoint. With colorful characters everyone knows and loves, this play is close enough to the movie to make the audience comfortable but is unique enough to keep you guessing. An excellent play with lots of room for improvising and humor, and that makes it a lot of fun.”

*Hallie Leach,
Mt. Alvernia High School,
Pittsburgh, Pa.*

THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ

SCENE: *Played on the apron or forestage, with curtain closed and houselights brought partly down, to maintain awareness that this is a theatre and the audience knows itself to be in that place. Overture music fades under, but stays in as FRANK BAUM enters down an aisle carrying his book, talking quietly and naturally as he walks, to USHERS and nearby AUDIENCE MEMBERS. He must be completely direct, unpretentious, real.*

FRANK *(true to his name, as he is entering).* How's it going? Just about ready? All set? *(Etc. He climbs over the edge of the stage.)* Excuse me...*(Looking over the place, house-counting with his eyes, checking readiness of sound and light people.)* All right now, listen! *(Opens his book, finds the place.)* This is the way it really was... *(Finding it hard to read.)* Hey, Joe?*

(STAGE MANAGER is sticking his/her head out from the wings, or answers from booth—wherever the show's real stage manager is stationed.)

STAGE MANAGER. Yo! *(Or "Yup"—whatever is natural.)*

* *Real names of the people in this production should be used for this opening.*

FRANK. Can we have a little light out here, please? I think we're about ready to start.

STAGE MANAGER (*lights sneak in*). You got it.

FRANK. Thanks. (*Feeling the light.*) Good. (*To AUDIENCE.*) Ready? (*Really noting a response.*) Right. (*Getting book open to the right place.*) Now you see, Dorothy—ready, Sharon?*

(*ACTRESS PLAYING DOROTHY is entering, readying herself; STAGEHAND hands her a tin bucket.*)

ACTRESS PLAYING DOROTHY. Yes sir. Thanks, Joe.*

FRANK. Marv?*

(*ACTOR PLAYING UNCLE HENRY is entering from opposite side, carrying hoe, gesturing response.*)

ACTOR PLAYING UNCLE HENRY. Ready when you are.

FRANK. Sally?*

(*ACTRESS PLAYING EM is entering R, tying her apron.*)

ACTRESS PLAYING EM. Right here. (*JOE hands her the chicken-feed bowl.*) Thanks, Joe.*

FRANK. Everybody? (*Responses from CREWS, OFF-STAGE ACTORS, REAL STAGE MANAGER.*) Now you see, Dorothy...

* *Real names of the people in this production should be used for this opening.*

(DOROTHY, now in character, is entering scene, carrying the empty bucket in a swing-around, fool-around way, and quietly singing or humming or whistling to herself any pre-1900 song that appeals to the actress and director.)

FRANK. ...lived in the midst of the great, gray Kansas prairies. *(House lights sneak out; stage lights and music sneak in; music underscores narration, holding until TOTO's entrance.)* Now, there's no scenery in this scene, because we want to concentrate on the *image* of the prairies, the way you do when you read: *see* as far as you can... Kansas folks are far-sighted—it's so flat in the prairie, the horizon's so far away, the sky is so all-around and big; nothing comes between you and the sky...that's where Dorothy lived—with Uncle Henry, who was a farmer...

(HENRY has entered L on cue of hearing his name; crosses to R of DOROTHY as he speaks.)

HENRY. Dorothy, didja fetch that water in yet for your Aunt Em?

DOROTHY *(caught)*. Well, I was just—

FRANK. —and Aunt Em, his wife, who—

(EM has entered R on name cue, now in character; crosses to L of DOROTHY.)

EM. Didja fetch that water in yet, Dorothy?

DOROTHY. I was just going for it, Aunt Em...*(HENRY has been peering concentratedly at the sky straight out front; wiping his sweaty neck with a faded bandana*

handkerchief, slightly shakes his head in habitual worry. EM has also paused to squint-scan the sky fretfully, so that they seem to be living in parallel lines, with the prairie-sky their focus. Now, HENRY, hoe on shoulder, exits plodding, R, as EM does, L, resuming low-tone chicken-feed chant as she goes. As they exit, leaving DOROTHY alone C, their focus is earth-bound, but DOROTHY is still sky-gazing, seeing different visions from theirs.)

FRANK (during the above action). When Dorothy stood in the yard of their little one-room house, she could see nothing but the great, gray prairie on every side. Not a tree nor a house broke the broad sweep of flat country that reached to the edge of the sky in all directions.

DOROTHY. I wonder what's beyond the edge over there ...What's past the part of the world I can see from where I am, do you reckon?

FRANK. It was her good old dog, Toto, that made Dorothy laugh, and saved her from growing as gray as her surroundings. They played together, every chance they got.

(TOTO enters playing, in a burst of energy, frolicking toward DOROTHY and wagging rear-end with magnificent, joyous vigor. Rolls over to get his belly tickled; then a rowdy play-around: bright, life-proving, affectionate. DOROTHY grabs the forgotten, empty bucket and putting it over her head, she sticks out arms and waves them, monster-style, making weird noises at TOTO, who is stopped in his tracks by her act. He barks fiercely, then questioningly; then whines piteously, which makes DOROTHY pop out again, laughing. TOTO is instantly

relieved and back into playing. DOROTHY bends to bent-knee sprinting position, poised on line with TOTO.)

DOROTHY. Come on, race you to the well! One—Two—*(TOTO dashes.)* TOTO! No fair! Get back here. *(Chagrined, he does.)* Now: one—two—three—GO! *(They race off L. Sound and lights begin build to storm.)*
FRANK *(ominously)*. But, then one day...

(DOROTHY backs on, looking at the sky off L, turns slowly D, still looking skyward; TOTO follows, nervous, smelling the air, staying close to DOROTHY as she moves C.)

FRANK. ...from out of the south *(In the same suspenseful tone of narration.)* Sound! *(Sound cue for wind increases and becomes noticeable.)*—a low wail of the wind came...LIGHTS! *(Light dimming becomes noticeable.)*

(HENRY is entering R, crossing partway, studying sky with rising anxiety.)

HENRY. There's a cyclone comin', Em. *(Runs off L.)* I'll go see to the stock. Get to the storm cellar!

(EM is entering L.)

EM. Cyclone!

DOROTHY. Cyclone...

FRANK. It is the most dread word in the whole language of Kansas.

DOROTHY. Cyclone's comin'...

EM. Quick Dorothy, run! (*Runs, exit R.*) Run for the cellarr...(*Off, the wail of her call urgent and distancing.*)

FRANK. Dorothy was no fool; she *did* run, like lightning...(*She has been transfixed; now breaks into action under the rest of FRANK's narration.*) and so did Toto, who was no fool, either...But, now let me tell you what *really* happened: see, Toto followed a get-down-under, animal instinct, and ran under the bed, for cover...

DOROTHY. Toto!

FRANK. —*That's* why Dorothy lost that crucial split second—

DOROTHY. Toto!

FRANK. —trying to get Toto out of there—

DOROTHY (*screaming, off*). Toto-o-o-o—

AUNT EM's VOICE. Come on, Child! Dorothy! (*Fading.*) Dor—theeeee...(*The VOICES fade away as wind rises, continuing under narration.*)

FRANK. —so before Dorothy could get Toto and herself down into the storm cellar, there came a great shriek from the wind...(*Sound of it, U, hold, then under. Strobe light on curtain.*)—and the house shook—I mean *hard*—and whirled around...and then rose slowly in the air, like a balloon. You see, the winds met where the house stood, at the exact center of the cyclone, and raised the house up—to the very TOP of the cyclone, which carried it like a feather...(*Sound tapers down.*) for miles and hours, hours and miles...UNTIL... Dorothy was jolted by a shock so sharp that it shook her breathless, and flung her out the door and away from the house...(*Wind sound has segued into music as curtain rises...*)

SCENE TWO

SCENE: ...*Slowly, to discover DOROTHY gazing wonder-struck, from her flung-out position, on Munchkin Country, Land of Oz.*

FRANK (*uninterrupted*). ...where she was amazed to find herself in the midst of a country of marvelous beauty ...of green grass, rich and luscious fruits, and rare and brilliant birds sweet-singing along with sparkling water sounds very grateful to a prairie girl's ears.

DOROTHY. Toto, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore. (*She has been taking all of this in, awed, as TOTO smells cautiously around.*)

(A negotiable number of MUNCHKINS now enter, from as various parts of the set as their number allows, nervously, quietly edging on. TOTO sniffs investigatively, then bee-lines back to DOROTHY to report in descriptive, confidential whines that these are absolutely NOT Kansas farmers, but Something Else. MUNCHKINS cringe on the fringes of the scene, signalling to OFF-STAGE OTHERS. WITCH OF THE NORTH is entering with breezy, cheery confidence. True to Baum's book, she is wonderfully old and sprightly. She is reminiscent of the White Queen in that she's a bit spacey, never quite getting her act—or her wardrobe—together, and never really minding. The combination of absent-mindedness and unself-consciousness combines charmingly with her supernatural powers and kind heart. She is irresistible and funny.)

WITCH OF THE NORTH. You are welcome, most noble Sorceress, to the Land of the Munchkins. (*The MUNCHKINS, individually characterized—each finds his/her own style, visually and vocally, of greeting DOROTHY, all at once. DOROTHY falls back on her habitual company manners.*)

DOROTHY. Thank you very—Sorceress? Me? I'm not a sorceress! I'm just...

WITCH (*disregarding this modesty, sailing on*). We are so grateful to you for destroying the Wicked Witch of the East...(*MUNCHKINS variously concur, in motley chorus.*)...and for setting our people (*Jubilantly.*) free from bondage! (*The MUNCHKINS, as if on cue, perform an "appreciation-of-freeing-us" ceremony: grabbing hands, they do a fast, exuberant serpentine around DOROTHY, the WITCH joining, and rush her across to perch her on a level, throne-like; then each rapidly and individually bow before her—having first lined up like school children—saying, "Welcome!!" During this, FRANK has taken a flower-crown from the STAGEHAND and handed it to the SMALLEST MUNCHKIN, who has dashed to above DOROTHY and done the Coronation, just in time to get his own bow and "Welcome" in. DOROTHY is overwhelmed.*)

DOROTHY. You are very kind...

MUNCHKINS (*delighted, buzzing among themselves*). I think she liked it! I think she likes US! I think we might be able to get her to stay here and...(*Etc.*)

DOROTHY (*a little desperate, but still polite*). ...but, there must be some mistake!

MUNCHKINS (*crestfallen*). Mistake? What do you mean, mistake? (*Etc.*)

DOROTHY (*pressing on*). I haven't destroyed anyone!

WITCH (*laughing*). Well, your house did, anyway, and that comes to the same thing! See? (*Pointing*.) There are her two shoes...

MUNCHKINS (*delighted*). Lookit! That's the END of her! Get it? END of...?

WITCH. ...still sticking out from under a block of wood.

(NOTE: The following is an optional bit; if it doesn't seem in rehearsal to be holding, these responses can be omitted so that DOROTHY's next line picks up immediately from WITCH's "block of wood." If this response is used, it needs to be in a high, kidding-around mood of word-playing, inter-lapping, building on each other: such groaners as—"And would she block you?! She would if she could! But, the wood blocked her! Knocked her block off! And not just block and blue!" Etc.)

DOROTHY (*topping, distressed*). Oh, no! The house must have fallen on her...what are we gonna do??

MUNCHKINS (*various overlapping readings*). Do?

WITCH (*calmly, serenely, cheerily*). There is nothing to be done.

TOTO (*sniffing the feet, announces that they are indeed bad medicine*). Rough! (*The MUNCHKINS whisper, a rapid consultation with WITCH.*)

WITCH. Excuse me, but is that—creature—with you, a sorcerer, too?

DOROTHY. Why, no—that's Toto. (*Who is instantly alerted and questioning.*)

MUNCHKINS. What's a Toto? We've never seen a Toto before...

DOROTHY. That's his *name*. He's my *dog*, of course.

MUNCHKINS. Dog? (*Trying out the sound of it.*) “Dog.”
(*Then definitively.*) “DOG.”

WITCH (*naturally open to new discoveries*). Curious! Very interesting. (*Touching TOTO, maybe scratching gently behind his ears, then sniffing delightedly at her fingers and letting the MUNCHKINS smell them, too.*) You see, this Toto-dog (*TOTO reacts again, at the ready.*) is not a matter “of course” to us. (*TOTO sniffs the direction of the DEAD WITCH again, seeking further clues and “mutt-ering” about it in Dog-talk. DOROTHY is reminded again of what’s happened.*)

DOROTHY. But who was she?

WITCH. She was the Wicked Witch of the East, I told you. She has ground down all the Munchkins in slavery for years. Now they’re all *free*, and grateful to you for the favor.

MUNCHKINS. Yay! The Wicked old Witch is DEAD!
(*FRANK has handed a bunch of cheer-leading pom-poms—blue is Munchkin Country’s favorite color—to a MUNCHKIN, who has quickly passed them around and now leads them in a spirited, classic football cheer.*)
Give us an M! Give us a U! (*Etc. On through to a climactic:*) MUNCHKINS—YAAAAAAAY! (*FRANK, enjoying it all, but detached as if invisible, relieves them of the props, which he hands off to the STAGEHAND. DOROTHY is delighted by their contagious, comic joy, but still anxious to figure out where, what, why.*)

DOROTHY. But who *are* the Munchkins?

WITCH. Why, they’re these people (*Large, vague, all-around gesture to include not only those on stage but also all of their offstage cousins.*) who live here in this land of the East where the Wicked Witch ruled.

DOROTHY. Are you a Munchkin?

WITCH (*laughing a little, surprised by the idea*). Oh, no—but I am their friend.

MUNCHKINS (*general confirmation*). She well and truly is! I'll say! (*Etc.*)

WITCH. When they saw that the Witch of the East was dead, they sent for me...and of course I came at once. By the way, I am the Witch of the North. (*Gracious and matter-of-fact, as at a tea party. DOROTHY is backing away, shrinking.*)

DOROTHY. Oh, no! Are you a real witch? (*TOTO stations himself between DOROTHY, to protect her, and WITCH, to whom he remarks in Dogese that she'd better not lay a finger, etc. The WITCH is graciously taking it all in stride, amused.*)

WITCH. Yes, indeed, I'm real.

DOROTHY (*on reflex, turns away, kneeling to pray in quiet, toneless, habitual chant*). O, Lord, that watches over sailors at sea...

WITCH (*patiently, kindly, firmly*). ...But I am a good witch. (*The MUNCHKINS offer general strong support of this statement.*)

DOROTHY (*only partially reassured, but slowly turning and rising*). But, I thought all witches were wicked.

WITCH (*amused and astounded at the grossness of this misconception*). Oh, no! That is a great mistake! There are only...(*She momentarily blanks, because; although her wisdom and power are vast, trivial "facts"—especially numbers—elude her. Never mind: the MUNCHKINS delight in filling in her blanks for her as she lectures, and she gratefully, admiringly accepts their assistance. This is double fun if MUNCHKINS are played by children.*)

MUNCHKINS (*in chorus*). FOUR!