

Excerpt Terms & Conditions

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity of scripts.

Family Plays

CHRISTMAS ALL OVER THE PLACE

A Contemporary Christmas Play
from
THE PAPER BAG PLAYERS

Book by
JUDITH MARTIN

Music by
DONALD ASHWANDER



CHRISTMAS ALL OVER THE PLACE

An engaging Christmas miniplay from the famous Paper Bag Players, about a merrily mixed up misunderstanding, glowing with rollicking songs.

Comedy. Book by Judith Martin. Music by Donald Ashwander.
Cast: 4m., 5w. The four Hufflepuffs and the four Wigglebees, former neighbors now living a winter apart in the North and the South, have accidentally invited each family to spend Christmas with the other. On the same day, each family flies to opposite ends of the country and, despite comedy confusion, they discover goodwill, good cheer and Christmas all over the place. Ideal for in-school performance. *Setting of painted cardboard, 2 interiors, 1 airplane. Contemporary costumes. Music in book.*
Approximate running time: 20 minutes. Code: CH3

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098-3308
Phone: (800) 448-7469 / (815) 338-7170
Fax: (800) 334-5302 / (815) 338-8981

www.FamilyPlays.com

ISBN-13 978-0-88680-113-2



9 780876 1021132 >

Christmas All Over the Place

CHRISTMAS ALL OVER THE PLACE

A Contemporary Christmas Play

from

THE PAPER BAG PLAYERS

by

JUDITH MARTIN

Music by

DONALD ASHWANDER

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by FAMILY PLAYS without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website www.FamilyPlays.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: FAMILY PLAYS, 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

© 1977 by
ANCHORAGE PRESS, INC.

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(CHRISTMAS ALL OVER THE PLACE)

ISBN: 978-0-87602-113-2

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author(s) of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author(s) *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author(s), if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
Family Plays of Woodstock, Illinois”

INTRODUCTION

Dan Sullivan, Theatre Critic of the Los Angeles Times, writes of the Paper Bag Players, creators of these plays:

“Every so often the kids on my block are inspired to go ‘trash-digging,’ i.e. checking out the neighbors’ trash cans for the neat stuff they may have thrown away. The Paper Bag Players have been trash-digging for years and making wondrous props from what they’ve found, skyscrapers from refrigerator cartons, dragons from shopping bags. They were into recycling and found-objects before the terms were invented.

“But that’s not their principle genius. Nor is it their bounce as performers, so total sometimes that they seem to be made of one of those Walt Disney miracle substances, like flubber. The Bags’ magic goes deeper than that. Remember Mary Poppins’ mystery elixir, raspberry for Michael, peppermint for Jane? That’s how a Bags’ performance works. Whatever one’s age, they seem to be speaking especially to you, saying they understand what it’s like to be five or eleven or forty-three. Take their classic sketch, ‘Ma and the Kids.’ If you’re a parent it’s about Ma. If you’re a kid it’s about The Kids. If you’re a paper bag, I suppose it’s about that.

“At the same time they’re hitting everybody’s funny bone, our common delight in spills and squabbles and logic stretched so far that it’s goofy. To weld an audience of kids and grownups together with laughter at the same time you’re talking to all of them as individuals --- not even Mary Poppins could do that.”

-- Los Angeles, 1976

CAST OF CHARACTERS

HORACE HUFFENPUFF (FATHER H.)
HANNAH HUFFENPUFF (MOTHER H.)
HAPPY HUFFENPUFF(CHILD)
HARRY HUFFENPUFF(CHILD)
WILBUR WIGGLEBEE (FATHER W.)
WILMA WIGGLEBEE(MOTHER W.)
GRANDMA WIGGLEBEE
WANDA WIGGLEBEE(CHILD)
MRS. GOODE

The cast of characters can be expanded or contracted. If one is short of actors, the grandmother's role can be eliminated and her lines given to the mother. The two children's parts in the Huffenpuff family could easily be combined and played by one child. On the other hand, if there is an abundance of actors both families could be enlarged by having lots of children. In either case, a simple adjustment of the lines would accommodate these changes.

SETTING

THE HUFFENPUFF HOUSE
THE WIGGLEBEE HOUSE
AN AIRPLANE

COSTUMES

The cast should be dressed in clothes suggesting the climates they live in — the Wigglebees in summer clothes and the Huffenpuffs in warm winter clothes. In the final scene, the families change to night-clothes.

SCENERY

The stage is bare, and when scenery is needed it is carried on and off. The two houses are made from two large pieces of cardboard (appliance stores often have refrigerator cartons which would supply cardboard of an appropriate size; if you cannot find large pieces, tape smaller ones together). The exterior of each house is painted on one side, the interior is painted on the other side. Paint in lots of plants in the southern house.

A door should be painted on the exteriors of the houses, and cut so that the actors can enter. On the reverse of interior sides of the houses, the cut around the door can be camouflaged by incorporating its edges in the painted outline of a piece of furniture. There is one movable object in the interior of each house — an oversized telephone, cut from cardboard and fitted into a slot on the set or, better yet, attached with Velcro to the set.

The house cardboards can be scored and slightly folded to form panels like a screen so that they can be self-standing. It would be helpful to have a stage hand, holding the cardboard from behind, bring the house on and off stage and, if needed, steady it during the scene, but it is possible for the cast to carry the house on and off. In the indoor scenes the actors come from behind the house, giving the illusion of another room; in the outdoor ones they approach the house from the wings. A cardboard box to hold props can be placed behind each house. As each house disappears, so must the props used in the scene. While moving the houses on and off, play the music of the “Christmas All Over The Place” song to strengthen the theatricality of this interval, and to make the song an integral part of the play.

The airplace is also cut from cardboard, painted a different color on each side to suggest two different planes. A window is cut out in the side of the plane to show the faces of the families, who carry their planes across the stage by means of hand holes also cut in the cardboard.

(The play opens in the interior of the Huffenpuff house.)

FATHER H.: So long, everybody. I’m off to the post office.

MOTHER H.: *(holding scissors, string, paper)* Don’t forget. They all go air mail special delivery.

HAPPY: Wait, Dad. Wait for my present.

(FATHER H. bends down so HAPPY can reach the top of the pile and all the presents fall to the floor.)

HARRY: Now look what you’ve done.

(There is a scramble to pick up the packages and balance them again in FATHER H.’s arms.)

HARRY: Say, Happy, the postman is going to have to be a mind reader to figure out the address on your package.

MOTHER H.: Harry, dear, Happy is just learning how to write. I’m sure the postman will understand.

FATHER H.: Hey, everybody, don’t forget about me standing here. These packages aren’t getting any lighter.

MOTHER H.: Harry, go open the door for your father.

FATHER H.: I can't see where I'm going. Point me in the right direction.

MOTHER H.: Do you want Harry to go with you?

FATHER H.: No. I'll be able to go faster alone.

MOTHER H.: I just hope those presents get there on time.

FATHER H.: Well, I'll rush them to the post office. If the post office keeps rushing them, they'll make it.

(FATHER H. goes off balancing packages. MOTHER H. and CHILDREN pick up ribbons, string, papers, which MOTHER H. puts away neatly in her apron pockets.)

MOTHER H.: The presents to the Wigglebees are off! That means Christmas to me.

HARRY: Do you think the Wigglebees are wishing for a white Christmas?

MOTHER H.: A sunny Christmas is just as nice as a white one.

HARRY: Well, I wish they still lived next door.

MOTHER H.: I'm not surprised. I think you were at their house more than you were at home.

HAPPY: I hope Wanda likes the bathing suit I gave her.

MOTHER H.: If you like it, she'll like it.

(FATHER H. returns.)

FATHER H.: Look out. Here I come!

MOTHER H.: Back so soon! What happened?

(FATHER H. drops all the packages on the floor. Mops his forehead.)

FATHER H.: We're days too late. The post office said there wasn't a chance they'd get there on time.

MOTHER H.: Oh, no!

HARRY: They'll think we forgot about them.

HAPPY: Wanda is my best friend.

MOTHER H.: It's all my fault. Oh, why was I so careless?

FATHER H.: Wait! Stop! I have it. We'll deliver the presents ourselves.

MOTHER H.: What do you mean?

FATHER H.: We'll go there. We'll carry them. If the post office won't deliver these presents, the Huffenpuffs will.

MOTHER H.: You mean we'll take a trip? We'll visit the Wiggle-bees?

FATHER H.: Exactly!

HAPPY: Hooray.

MOTHER H.: But they don't expect us.

FATHER H.: Call them up.

MOTHER H.: All our summer things are in the attic. We can't go south in these clothes.

FATHER H.: Don't worry about little things like that.

HARRY: Come on, Ma.

HAPPY: Please call them.

(As MOTHER H. is dialing the telephone, the house of the WIGGLEBEES moves on stage. WILMA WIGGLEBEE is on the telephone. For the next scene both houses are on the stage at the same time. All the characters say their lines facing the audience to give the illusion that the houses are a great distance apart.)

MOTHER W.: Hello?

MOTHER H.: Wilma, this is Hannah.

MOTHER W.: Hannah! What a coincidence! I was just going to call you.

MOTHER H.: I'm calling because we were late with your presents this year.

MOTHER W.: Don't worry about it! We are, too!

MOTHER H.: But we were too late to mail them.

MOTHER W.: So were we!

MOTHER H.: Well, we were so upset we decided we would like to give you our presents in person.

MOTHER W.: You won't believe this, but that's exactly what we want to do.

MOTHER H.: Then we'll see each other.

MOTHER W.: At last.

MOTHER H.: The time has come.

BOTH: For a visit!

MOTHER W.: Now, I hope it's not too much trouble for you.

MOTHER H.: The way I see it, it's a lot more trouble for you than for us.

MOTHER W.: But it's no trouble at all. It's a pleasure. We're all thrilled.

MOTHER H.: A visit with you would be the best Christmas present we could give ourselves.

MOTHER W.: We agree. It's wonderful.

BOTH: We'll have a visit!

WANDA: I want to talk to Happy.

HAPPY: Hello Wanda.

WANDA: Hello Happy.

HAPPY: You're my best friend.

WANDA: You're my best friend.

MOTHER W.: Say goodbye, dear. You'll see each other very soon.

WANDA: Goodbye, Happy.

HAPPY: Goodbye, Wanda.

(They put down the phone.)

EVERYONE: Let's pack!

(The HUFFENPUFF house moves off stage right.)

GRANDMA W.: In all this excitement we mustn't forget about our plants. Who can we get to water them while we're away?

FATHER H.: Now, that doesn't seem like too big a problem to me.

WANDA: Can we ask Mrs. Goode?

MOTHER H.: Of course, I'll call her right now. *(Picks up the phone.)* Mrs. Goode, this is Wilma Wigglebee. We're unexpectedly going up north for the holiday. We're going to visit our dear, dear friends the Huffenpuffs. Would you water our plants while we're away? Thank you so much. We'll drop by with the key. Yes, we did plan to be here, but we're going to be there. No, we're not disappointed to be away from home for the holiday. It's Christmas everywhere. *(She hangs up.)* Now we've got to move fast.

FATHER W.: I'll check the plane schedules.

GRANDMA W.: I'll put away the decorations.

MOTHER W.: I'll get the suitcases.

WANDA: I want to carry my present for Happy.

(The WIGGLEBEES are running around their house, appearing and disappearing as their house slowly moves off stage left.)

GRANDMA W.: Bring warm sweaters!

FATHER W.: Count the packages!