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Dramatic Publishing

Pixies, Kings and Magical Things

FOUR TALES BY HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

The Swinedherd
The Pixie and the Grocer
The Emperor's New Clothes
The Ugly Duckling

Adapted by
RIC AVERILL

With optional music by Ric Averill.



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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(PIXIES, KINGS AND MAGICAL THINGS
Four Tales by Hans Christian Andersen)

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For David Longhurst, Susan Tate, Charles Higginson,
Ann Evans, Karmen Huyser
and
the Boards of the Lawrence Arts Center and the
Seem-To-Be-Players who continued to believe in me
even when the Emperor had no clothes.

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PIXIES, KINGS AND MAGICAL THINGS

FOUR TALES BY HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

With Optional Music

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PRODUCTION NOTES

SETTING: A fairy-tale unit set with some levels. For the first act (*The Swineherd*, *The Pixie and the Grocer*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*), the set needs to have a castle on one side and a humble cottage on the other. The cottage will be used as the Prince's house in the first fairy tale, as the Grocer's in the second and as the Weaver's in the third. The castle will be for the King and Princess during the first tale, not used in the second and for the Emperor in the third. Off of the cottage is a ladder that leads up to a platform for the Student in the second tale. Between the castle and cottage is a ramp, so the castle is at a higher level, and behind the ramp is a large fairy tale tree which separates the two areas. For the second act (*The Ugly Duckling*), the castle should be removed and additional trees, bushes and swamp should be added, with a downstage lake/pond area represented by a blue fabric groundcloth or platform. The changing of the seasons can be achieved with "revolving" trees and flats rotating through the seasons, with fabric and lights or in some other creative fashion. Scene changes should be done with lighting and simple rearrangement of sets and props.

COSTUMES: Actors can wear base costumes upon which pieces can be added: vests, robes, crowns, tunics, ears, tails and wings. The first three tales are very "classic" fairy-tale genre with beautiful fabric for royalty and simple for peasants. *The Ugly Duckling* should progress from simple and folksy to more and more beautiful, with Udrich gradually adding white feathers, a beautiful wingspan and pretty beak. Animals should be suggested not only by cos-

The Swineherd, The Pixie and the Grocer and The Emperor's New Clothes were first produced by the Seem-To-Be Players under the title, *The Emperor's New Clothes and Other Fairy Tales by Hans Christian Andersen*. The production toured nationally from 1999 through 2001 with the following production company:

H.C. Andersen, Prince, Student, Ministers . . . CHRIS WAUGH
Princess, Pixie, Weaver . . . M.T.F. PIAF LATHAM-WINTER-GREEN
King, Grocer, Emperor CHRIS JOHNSON

Stage Manager CYNTHIA DAHLBERG
Director, Sound Composition & Design RIC AVERILL
Set Design & Build JON CUPIT
Costume Design & Build JENNIFER GLENN

The same three plays were produced under the title *3 X Andersen: The Emperor's New Clothes* at the Zachary Scott Theatre in Austin, Texas, in the fall of 2001 with the following production company:

Ensemble Company Members:

DAMIAN GILLEN	JON WATSON
MAURICE MOORE	BETH JUGENHEIMER

Director JUDY MATETZSCHK, Ph.D.
Set Design JEFF CUNNINGHAM
Costume Design MARIT AAGAARD
Sound Design DAMIAN GILLEN

The Ugly Duckling was given its professional premiere at the Lily Theatre of the Children's Museum of Indianapolis in the spring of 2002 with the following production company:

Udrich (*Ugly Duckling*) RYAN METZGER
Mother Duck, Lady, Swan ASHLEY BROOKE HAMMAN
Brother Duck, Dog, Man CHRIS GOLDFARB
Sister Duck, Goose, Child CATHERINE MARY SMITH
Nelly, Greta, Hen SARA LOCKER
Fern, Turkey, Cat, Swan. BENJAMIN D. TEBBE

Director LYNNE PERKINS
Artistic Manager NANCY EDDY
Technical Director & Scenic Design JAY P. GANZ
Lighting Designer MARTI MEEKER
Costume Designer & Construction. SUSAN SANDEROCK
Stage Manager JULIE MARIE PARE
Production Assistant MICHELLE EUBANK
Music Director TINA VALDOIS-BRUNER
Set Construction JAY P. GANZ, MARTI MEEKER,
BARRY MCFARLANE
Props MARTI MEEKER
Scenic Painter SHANNON LOE
Sound Engineer. JAY P. GANZ
Board Operators MARTI MEEKER, BARRY MCFARLANE

PIXIES, KINGS AND MAGICAL THINGS

FOUR TALES BY HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

OPENING

(Music begins, there is a blackout. The KING and the PRINCESS take their places in front of the castle. HANS takes his place seated in a chair and is frozen, writing in a book that lies open on a table in front of him. He is in the peasant house. The music changes and HANS breaks out of the freeze.)

HANS. Hello. I'm H.C. Andersen. Hans Christian Andersen to you I'm sure, but the people of Denmark know me as H.C. Not Hans, not Christian, not Hans Christian, but H.C. Andersen. I'm known mostly for writing fairy tales, though I started out writing travel books, novels, poems and plays. But the fairy tales—they made me famous. I don't mind being famous, you know. When you are famous you get to visit kings and princesses and everyone treats you well and gives you lots of food.

(He indicates KING and PRINCESS. The actors may react to HANS' speech, doing some of the things he mentions, changing freeze appropriately.)

Of course, I wasn't always famous, and didn't always have much to eat. As a child, my father was a cobbler, my mother took in washing and we were very poor. I

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was also tall, gangly and awkward-looking, the kind of child others liked to make fun of—and they did—make fun of me. So I began to retreat, and to hide, in this world of fairy tales. Like the ones I'm going to share with you today.

(He stands up, points to castle area.)

You see, I was teased by everyone, boys and girls alike, and the first girl I ever truly loved would not even look at me. She was far too precious and far too special. She was a ballerina and perhaps a bit spoiled. Maybe a little like the Princess in this story called "The Swineherd." * There is a prince, who became a tender of pigs, that's what a swineherd is. You can see who's going to be King and Princess. So we'll begin. The Swineherd:

***ALTERNATE:** I'll play the Prince, who became a tender of pigs, that's what a swineherd is. You can see who's going to be King and Princess. So we'll begin. The Swineherd:

(Music changes and the KING and PRINCESS come to life. •HANS may change into a prince's robe to portray the PRINCE, if desired.)

The Swineherd

PRINCESS. Oh, Daddy, oh, Daddy, oh, Daddy, oh, Daddy ...

KING. Yes, Princess?

PRINCESS. Oh, Daddy.

KING. Yes?

PRINCESS. Whatever shall we do today?

KING. Well—

PRINCESS. I know. Let's go the village and buy me new clothes.

KING. Actually—

PRINCESS. Or new toys. Yes, let's go to the toymakers and—

KING (*stern*). Princess!

PRINCESS (*notices that he's serious*). Yes, Daddy?

KING. I think it's time you were married.

PRINCESS. Married?

KING. Yes. So someone else can take care of you for a while.

PRINCESS. Oh. (*Pause.*) To a boy?

(*PRINCE enters, notices them, hides and listens.*)

KING. Preferably a boy of royal blood.

PRINCESS. But I get to choose him, don't I, Daddy?

KING. Of course, dearest. As long as I like him and he has property, wealth and a title.

PRINCESS. Then I will marry the prince who sends me the nicest, sweetest treasure of all.

(She sits, the KING walks off. PRINCE looks forward.)

PRINCE. I am a prince. There's the title. *(Indicates the cottage.)* I have money, well, a little. *(Pulls out a sixpence.)* And I do have property. And a few treasures left by my father. *(He leans over and picks a rose from a beautiful bush, skips to the castle.)* Hello, Princess.

PRINCESS. My, who are you?

PRINCE. I am a prince from the kingdom right over there.

And I give you this rose. *(He waits for her response.)*

PRINCESS. And?

PRINCE *(tongue-tied)*. Marry me? *(He dashes off.)*

PRINCESS *(smells the rose, looks at it, pulls off a petal)*.

KING *(comes in)*. Oh, Daddy. I'm so disappointed.

KING. What is it, Princess?

PRINCESS. A somewhat handsome prince came by, but this is all he gave me.

KING *(taking the rose, he is stunned)*. This is beautiful. It's a once-only-every-five-years rose, the very rarest, grown only in the gardens of true kings.

PRINCESS. But it's real. It will wilt and fall apart and be of no use. I won't marry him.

KING *(sighs)*. Oh, my, oh, my.

(He exits. The PRINCESS looks at her and walks to a cage and gets out a "bird.")

PRINCE. Here, you beautiful nightingale. Sing for the Princess and she will surely want to marry me. *(The nightin-*

gale sings and it is lovely. He skips to where the PRINCESS sits.) Oh, Princess. I have another treasure for you! (He hands her the bird.)

PRINCESS. And?

PRINCE. Be my bride?

(She laughs. He leaves the bird and runs off. PRINCESS looks at the bird.)

PRINCESS. Oh, how quaint. A lovely stuffed bird! So sweet. *(The bird sings.)* And such nice music. *(She picks it up.)* Daddy, daddy!

KING *(entering in a hurry)*. Yes, Princess?

PRINCESS. A prince who seemed a little more handsome than the last one came by and gave me this beautiful... *(There is a nasty sound effect and she suddenly screams and reacts as though she's been "pooped on" by the bird.)* ...real bird, and it messed on me! *(She tosses the bird in the air and it zips out of sight.)* Fly away, you nasty thing!

KING. Oh, my, did you see that? That was a royal nightingale. Only the finest courts have such a bird.

PRINCESS. I don't want it. It's real and real things are messy.

(She sits and pouts, the KING sits nearby, dissatisfied as well.)

KING. You'll never be happy.

PRINCE *(steps to the wall and picks up a strange-looking kettle with bells around the edges of it)*. Not happy with the rose, nor with the bird?

The Pixie and the Grocer

GROCER. Good morning, good morning, good morning.
(He greets even the most inanimate objects in his store.)
Good morning to you, dearest wastebarel. Good morning, door, good morning, window, good morning, Pixie, wherever you are.

(PIXIE pops her head out and smiles, then hides again.
STUDENT comes "downstairs" from the cottage loft.)

GROCER. Good morning, dear student, who lives in the flat upstairs. What can I do for you today?

STUDENT. No, Grocer, it's what I can do for you. I have the rent and need to buy a small candle so I can read at night.

GROCER. Candle to read. Well, certainly you need that. And thank you for the rent. You are a dear boy, you are indeed. And what are you reading these days?

STUDENT. Books. Books, sir.

GROCER. Smart. You are such a smart student. If I were a student, I, too, would read books. After all, it would be foolish to read a tree, or a barrel, or a fish, now wouldn't it? Here's your candle.

STUDENT. My thanks. *(The STUDENT returns to the loft.)*

GROCER. There is a smart lad, yes, very smart indeed.

STUDENT *(looks back down at the GROCER)*. There is a man who talks a lot, but doesn't say much.

GROCER. I'm to bed, but mustn't sleep without leaving a little something for that pixie I'm sure lives around here somewhere. Heh-heh. *(He sets down a bowl of porridge and goes to the tree, yawns and goes off stage.)*

PIXIE. Oh, yes, porridge with a bit of butter in it. Pixie food, for sure, you know. I do have a pleasant life.

(Eats the porridge rapidly, then yawns, crawls under the table and sleeps. There is music, lights dim, return to full. GROCER walks on, yawning, goes to the empty bowl.)

GROCER. Yes, oh, yes, oh, yes, oh, yes. I am a lucky grocer indeed—to have a pixie in my house, I am a blessed man. For nothing terrible will ever happen as long as I have the luck of the Pixie.

PIXIE *(smiles, yawns, rolls over and laughs)*. Lucky indeed. And porridge every night.

(The STUDENT returns downstairs.)

STUDENT. Grocer. Grocer. I've received my allowance from home and would dearly love a bit of bread and cheese.

GROCER. Bread and cheese it will be, then. I have fine cheese and a fresh loaf of bread made only this morning. Here let me wrap the cheese. *(He pulls a page from a book and begins to wrap the cheese in it.)*

STUDENT. Wait, stop. What are you doing?

(The PIXIE is watching.)

GROCER. Wrapping your cheese. Can't have you walking around and dropping it for the mice—

STUDENT. No, what are you wrapping it with?

GROCER. Just these pages from this old book. (*The STUDENT opens the page and reads it to himself.*) The baker traded it to me for coffee beans, you see, and—

STUDENT. This is poetry. Oh, will you sell me the whole book? I'll give back the cheese, for I'd rather have poetry than a bit of cheese any day.

GROCER. Poetry than cheese? Well, I suppose. I don't know what good it will do your belly.

STUDENT. Oh, you silly man. You have no more sense of poetry than that barrel.

(The STUDENT smiles, takes the book and the bread and returns to his loft. The GROCER shakes his head.)

GROCER. Why would I need a sense of poetry?

(He puts out porridge, as PIXIE watches, then yawns and goes off to sleep.)

PIXIE. What a thing to say. That student is... but the Grocer does talk all the time. I shall steal his chatterbox and find out the truth of this matter.

(The PIXIE runs off stage, and comes back on with a strange-looking little box. When the PIXIE opens it, a set of chattering teeth begin to make a racket. PIXIE puts the box in the barrel, which turns around, and seems to have a face on one side. •The BARREL may speak with the voice of the GROCER.)

The Emperor's New Clothes

(EMPEROR enters carrying a mirror.)

EMPEROR. Oh, me, oh, my, I am the grandest in the land. Such fine clothes, such a handsome face, such a delightful me. Oh, Minister! Minister of the High Hat!

•If HANS or one actor plays both MINISTERS, there should be a reversible vest and two very different hats, as well as differing vocal characterization.

MINISTER OF THE HIGH HAT. Yes, Your Majesty, how low shall I bow today?

EMPEROR. Oh, don't bow at all, Minister of the High Hat. You wouldn't be able to see my face. Do I not look marvelous?

MINISTER OF THE HIGH HAT. You do not.

EMPEROR. What?

MINISTER OF THE HIGH HAT. You do! You look marvelous.

EMPEROR. And isn't this the finest cloak you've ever seen?

MINISTER OF THE HIGH HAT. Oh, yes, Your Majesty, it is.

EMPEROR. No, it's not. Go get the Minister of the Low Hat, we'll see what he says.

MINISTER OF THE HIGH HAT. Oh, Minister of the Low Hat! Minister of the Low Hat!

(Goes backstage, LOW HAT comes on.)

MINISTER OF THE LOW HAT. Yes, what is it Minister of the High Hat?

EMPEROR. Actually, it's I who called for you, Minister. How do I look?

MINISTER OF THE LOW HAT. How do you want to look?

EMPEROR. Grand.

MINISTER OF THE LOW HAT. Then you look grand.

EMPEROR. No, I don't!

MINISTER OF THE LOW HAT. All right, you don't. You look awful, miserable, terrible, like something the cat dragged in from the moat and a carriage rolled over it back and forth and back and forth and—

EMPEROR. Enough! The problem is, I need new clothes. I haven't had any for at least three days. *(Suddenly throwing a childish fit.)* I want the finest new clothes in the kingdom.

MINISTER OF THE LOW HAT. But, sir, what about paying the army?

EMPEROR *(calms down, petulant)*. Who needs an army—they would refuse to protect me if I look as shabby as this.

MINISTER OF THE LOW HAT. But what about helping the poor?

EMPEROR. They didn't have my help getting poor, why should I help them stop being poor?

MINISTER OF THE LOW HAT. What would you have me do, then, Your Majesty?

EMPEROR. I will make a proclamation!

MINISTER OF THE LOW HAT. All listen to the Emperor!

(The WEAVER comes out from hiding and watches the two banter.)

EMPEROR. I proclaim that whoever makes the Emperor the finest clothes in all the world shall be richest person in all the world and beyond!

MINISTER OF THE LOW HAT. Is there a beyond?

EMPEROR. Go proclaim!

MINISTER OF THE LOW HAT *(walks off proclaiming)*.

Whoever makes the Emperor the finest clothes in—

(MINISTER OF THE HIGH HAT enters talking where other MINISTER leaves off.)

MINISTER OF THE HIGH HAT. —in all the world shall be richest person in all the world and beyond! *(Pause.)* Is there a beyond?

EMPEROR. There is, and I'm going to send you there if you don't do everything I say, when I say it.

MINISTER OF THE HIGH HAT. Just tell me what to do!

EMPEROR. Be quiet. *(MINISTER is quiet. EMPEROR waits a moment, gets frustrated.)* All right, say something.

MINISTER OF THE HIGH HAT. Something.

EMPEROR *(exasperated)*. No, tell me how grand I look!

MINISTER OF THE HIGH HAT. You look grand, really grand—

EMPEROR. No, I don't! I need new clothes!!! Out of my sight!

(*MINISTER leaves and WEAVER steps forward.*)

WEAVER. Your Majesty?

EMPEROR. What? Who are you? Out of my sight!

WEAVER. Fine. I'll leave. Though I do think you would have liked the new clothing I was going to offer to make. (*Starts to leave.*)

EMPEROR. Bother. Out of my...new clothing? Wait a moment, you. Who are you?

WEAVER. I am a weaver. Of magical cloth. I use gold and silver thread to make clothes that are so fine and so beautiful.

EMPEROR. So fine and so beautiful. That sounds like me. Go on.

WEAVER. They are enchanted so that only those people who are suited for their jobs, and who are not stupid can see the magical cloth.

EMPEROR. What?

WEAVER. The cloth. It's invisible to anyone who is not suited to their job—or just not too bright. (*Indicates her head.*)

EMPEROR. Oh, my.

WEAVER. Yes, Your Majesty. You will be able to instantly see who in your kingdom is good at their jobs and who is wise enough to surround you.

EMPEROR. Who is good at their jobs and wise enough to surround me. I like this. If you can truly make me beautiful clothes, then I will make you the richest weaver in the world.

WEAVER. Just to see you in these clothes will make me rich indeed—truly it will.

The Ugly Duckling

•If doing the non-musical version, cuts and/or additional lines will be noted in the script.

SCENE ONE

(Early spring. The seasons can be effected by lighting and the foliage on the trees and bushes done with fabric or with three- or four-sided flats—trees on a revolve—or in another creative fashion. Lights come up on MOTHER DUCK sitting calmly on top of three very large “eggs.” She is whistling. She calls offstage, first to one side, then the other.)

MOTHER DUCK. Hello. Hellooo! Anybody want to bring me a nice juicy worm? Or some fresh fish? Hello. Humph. Just as soon as you sit your brood, your friends fly away fast. My mother warned me. She did. “Do you really want to have eggs, my dear?” She said, wisely. Of course I said right back, “You really wanted *me*, didn’t you, Mama?” And she cried. *(Looks around. Cries.)* Nobody told me it would be this hard or this lonely! *(A sound is heard, like pecking.)* What was that? *(She looks down. She gets up, walks around the eggs.)* Oh, it’s nothing. If only...no, can’t live on “if onlys,” that’s what my father always said and he was a noble drake, he was. *(Another sound. She leaps up.)* I think I heard it!

I'm sure, I'm sure. (*Looks closely at the eggs.*) Sweet, sweet thing, are you hatching? I'm sure you are. Go on. Wait, you need a little more warmth, I'll bet. Uh-huh. (*She hops back on eggs and grits her teeth and grins.*) I wish I were even warmer. Urrrggghhh! (*She tries to be warmer.*) Urrrggghhh! Come on, hatch, you! Urrrggghhh! Gosh, I'm hungry. Urrrggghhh!

(*She stops in her tracks as two big NEIGHBOR DUCKS come waddling on.*)

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. Hey, Saffron, aren't your eggs done yet.

NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN. We heard you clear across the pond.

MOTHER DUCK (*embarrassed*). I don't know what you're talking about, Fern and Nelly. No, the eggs are not done. I'm letting them take their time.

NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN. Yeah? Bet you're hungry. (*Holds up a worm.*)

MOTHER DUCK. Hmmm, give me that.

NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN. Say please.

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. Don't be so mean, Fern. You weren't mean when I had my eggs.

MOTHER DUCK. I am sooo hungry. (*Makes a grab for the worm, comes off her eggs.*)

NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN. Don't let your eggs get cold.

MOTHER DUCK (*eats the worm, sighs*). Now, where was I? (*Moves back to the nest.*)

NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN. Wait a minute. Something's wrong.

MOTHER DUCK. Is not!

NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN. Nelly, did you see the size of that middle egg?

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. Now, Fern, you mustn't make Saffron nervous. Just because one of the eggs is monstrously big.

MOTHER DUCK. Monstrous?

NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN. No, no, no, don't be nervous. No one has hatched a dinosaur around here in a long, long time. A really long time.

MOTHER DUCK. Dinosaur?

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. Fern.

NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN. You saw how big it was.

MOTHER DUCK (to NELLY). Really big?

NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN. I'm afraid so. But I wouldn't worry. Perhaps it's just a turkey egg. That's how I was bamboozled once. Turkeys are always trying to think of a way to outsmart Thanksgiving. But the true test is this: turkeys can't swim.

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. Now you go on, Nelly. No eggs can swim.

NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN. I just meant when...

(There are pecking sounds.)

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. Oh, it's about to happen! I love it!

NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN. I'm getting out of here. New-borns are so... messy!

(Exits. More pecking sounds. Suddenly one of the large eggs pops open and BROTHER DUCK staggers out of the shell.)

BROTHER DUCK. Quack, cheep, quack. (*More pecking. BROTHER DUCK looks at MOTHER.*) Mommy?

MOTHER DUCK. Yes, darling boy. I'll name you Homer.

BROTHER DUCK. Homer, 'cause I'll stay close to home.
Cheep, cheep! Quack!

(*More pecking.*)

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. He's a mama's boy, all right.

(*The second egg breaks open and SISTER DUCK stumbles out.*)

BROTHER DUCK. Hello, Sister Duck. I'm Homer, your brother. (*He gives her a push, laughs.*)

SISTER DUCK. Yeouch! Not nice. Quack! (*Looks around.*) Mommy! (*Looks at NELLY.*)

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. No, I'm not your mommy, especially when you're acting up or messy. She's your mommy. (*Pushes SISTER to MOTHER.*)

MOTHER DUCK. What a sweetheart you are. I'll call you Bella because you're so pretty.

SISTER DUCK. I am? Let me look at my reflection in the pond. Cheep. (*Looks.*) I am pretty.

BROTHER DUCK (*looks*). I'm pretty, too.

MOTHER DUCK. This is your brother, Homer.

SISTER DUCK. Oh, 'cause he's homely?

BROTHER DUCK. Homer! Hey, when's our other brother gonna hatch?

SISTER DUCK. Might be a sister, if we're lucky.

MOTHER DUCK. Ducklings, don't quarrel.

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. Should be any minute.

MOTHER DUCK. I hope so. I have a brood to take care of, now. *(Sits on egg.)* Hurry up, child! It's time to hatch.

(BROTHER and SISTER tap their feet impatiently.)

BROTHER DUCK. Come on, Mom. We want to go into the wide world.

SISTER DUCK. Yeah, we want to learn how to eat stuff. We're hungry.

BROTHER DUCK. Yeah, and we want to learn how to swim.

MOTHER DUCK. I'm working. I'm working. Urrrggghhh!

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. Such a bright boy, all ready to swim.

(There is more pecking, and more, and more.)

SISTER DUCK. Gosh, that's sure a loud egg.

BROTHER DUCK. And slow.

MOTHER DUCK. Come on!

(There is a huge cracking sound and the egg splits and out comes the UGLY DUCKLING, very awkward and slightly bigger than the others.)

MOTHER DUCK. Oh, my.

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. He is big.

SISTER DUCK. And awkward.

BROTHER DUCK. And ugly.

ALL. Shh.

SISTER DUCK. What you going to name him, Mother?

MOTHER DUCK. I think I'll name him uh, uh... Udrich.
(*Pronounced Uh-drick.*)

BROTHER DUCK. Udrich, the Ugly Duckling.

NEIGHBOR DUCK NELLY. My, oh, my, I've got to tell Fern about this. Congratulations, Saffron, and... (*Looks back at UDRICH.*) ... good luck.

UGLY DUCKLING. Uh, hello. Mother?

MOTHER DUCK. Yes, I am, I think, I mean, you're my egg, my darling boy, my, uh, drake. My, uh, ...

BROTHER DUCK. Ugly brother.

SISTER DUCK. Are you sure you're a duck?

UGLY DUCKLING. I don't know. I was just born. I don't really know anything.

BROTHER DUCK. Oh, knowing is easy. Just *act* like you know, that's how I've gotten along all this time.

SISTER DUCK. You were just born, too.

BROTHER DUCK. Yeah, but he doesn't know that.

MOTHER DUCK. Now, listen, you three. You've hatched and I'm hungry. (*Looks at UDRICH.*) Udrich, you're not a turkey, are you?

UGLY DUCKLING. I don't think so. But I've never seen a turkey so I guess I really don't know.

MOTHER DUCK. Only one way to tell. Come along, children, we'll go down to the pond and swim. (*To UDRICH.*) If you can't swim, best speak up now and save us all the embarrassment.

UGLY DUCKLING. Swimming sounds great.

SISTER DUCK. It'll come to you. It's all instinct, baby, uh, big brother.

MOTHER DUCK. Let's go!

(Late spring, early summer, lights and fabric change as they go to swim downstage, bobbing for worms. DUCKLINGS may join her.)

(SWIMMING SONG)

MOTHER DUCK.

**SWIMMING, SWIMMING, ROUND WE GO,
FOLLOW WHERE THE WATERS FLOW,
FISH AND INSECTS WE WILL EAT,
BOBBING FOR A WORMY TREAT!**

•Non-musical version, simply eliminate this verse.

BROTHER DUCK. He is a duck!

SISTER DUCK. Yep, a natural swimmer.

MOTHER DUCK. Such grace in the water.

UGLY DUCKLING. Gee, thanks.

BROTHER DUCK *(grabbing a worm from UDRICH)*. Shares his worms with his brother, too.

SISTER DUCK. Homer.

UGLY DUCKLING. It's all right. *(Bobs again, brings up a worm and shares it with SISTER.)*

BROTHER DUCK. Hey, not fair being fair!

MOTHER DUCK. Ducklings, less play, more swimming and feeding. *(The DUCKLINGS laugh and continue to swim. MOTHER begins to sing again.)*

**SWIMMING IN THE SUMMER LAKE,
WINKING AT A HANDSOME DRAKE.**

(DUCKLINGS join her.)

48 PIXIES, KINGS AND MAGICAL THINGS

MOTHER DUCK & DUCKLINGS.

LOVING ALL THE SUMMER SOUNDS,
AS WE SWIM AROUND AND ROUND.

•**Non-musical version, simply eliminate this verse.**

(They swim as lights go down.)