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The Emperor's New Clothes



Musical comedy

**Book and lyrics
by
Eric Coble
Music and additional lyrics
by
Kenneth Kacner and Bill Hoffman**

"[This] hilarious, Caribbean-flavored
Emperor's New Clothes is an audience-
participatory blast with a sneaky little moral."

—Cleveland Plain Dealer

The Emperor's New Clothes

Musical comedy. Book and lyrics by Eric Coble. Music and additional lyrics by Kenneth Kacmar and Bill Hoffman. Cast: 1w., 3 either gender (may be expanded to 20 or more either gender). A Caribbean musical adaptation of the classic Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale! It's a big day on the tiny island of Little Iguana: it's young Jasmin Martín's birthday. Her wish is simple—to spend the day making sand castles with her parents and to try on the beautiful simple sash her father bought her. But the Emperor of the island sets all the fashion standards—from high-tops to headgear—and poor Jasmin's big day doesn't stand a chance against the thrills of the runway. Then "magic" tailor Uriah "Buzz" Butler swims ashore (having been kicked off the island of Little Barracuda for starting a rebellion), and he has his own ideas for a clothing line. Now the Emperor, his subjects and the whole island are in for a shock. This charming version features song styles of the Caribbean—calypso, reggae, ska, and even a hat-and-cane number (as well as audience participation and the most amazing loom you'll ever see on a stage)—all to make the point that clothes don't make the human! "Full of the little things kids love with a hilarious denouement worth the wait. Judging from the reaction of the young audience, the play's title character was the only one who didn't leave in stitches." (*St. Petersburg Times*) Area staging. Promotional CD available. Optional accompaniment CD available. Approximate running time: 45 minutes. Code: E03.

Cover photo: The Cleveland Play House Children's Theatre,
Cleveland, Ohio. (l-r) Colin Cook, Brandi Marie Holtz,
Kevin Joseph Kelly and James Mango.

Photo: Roger Mastroianni. Cover design: Susan Carle.



13 ISBN: 978-1-58342-409-4

10 ISBN: 1-58342-409-1



9 781583 424094



0 2007



Printed on Recycled Paper
www.DramaticPublishing.com

The Emperor's New Clothes

A Caribbean Adaptation

Book and Lyrics by
ERIC COBLE

Music and Additional Lyrics by
KENNETH KACMAR and BILL HOFFMAN

Based on the story by
HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN



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Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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Book and Lyrics by ERIC COBLE
Music and additional lyrics by
KENNETH KACMAR and BILL HOFFMAN

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(THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES)

For inquiries concerning all other rights, contact:
William Morris Agency, LLC,
1325 Avenue of the Americas, 15th floor,
New York NY 10019 - Phone: (212) 586-5100

ISBN: 978-1-58342-409-4

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All producers of the musical *must* give credit to the author and composers of the musical in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the musical and in all instances in which the title of the musical appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The names of the author and composers *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 (50%) the size of the title type and shall read as follows:

“Book and lyrics by Eric Coble. Music and additional lyrics by
Kenneth Kacmar and Bill Hoffman.”

In addition, all producers of the musical must include the following acknowledgment on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the musical and on all advertising and promotional materials:

“*The Emperor’s New Clothes* premiered at the Cleveland Play House on March 8, 1997, Peter Hackett, Artistic Director;
Dean R. Gladden, Managing Director.”

Biographical information on the authors and composers, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with THE DRAMATIC
PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois”

The Emperor's New Clothes premiered at the Cleveland Play House on March 8, 1997 (Peter Hackett, artistic director, Dean R. Gladden, managing director). It was directed by Susan Ericksen, Set and light design by Michael Roesch, costume design by Michelle Sampson, props by Qandle Qadir.

CAST

Phillipé Martín Stacy Pendergraft
Jasmin Jessica Neeman
The Emperor Tim Perfect
Grand Duke Barbados Ann Keen
Uriah "Buzz" Butler Hal Core

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

CHARACTERS:

PHILLIPE MARTIN. the entire island tourism board

JASMIN MARTIN his daughter

GRAND DUKE BARBADOS . . . the right-hand-style man

THE EMPEROR. a walking fashion statement

URIAH "BUZZ" BUTLER . . . a walking fashion disaster

Various Actors, Peasants, Pieces of the Loom, etc.

PLACE: The island of Little Iguana, in the Caribbean.

TIME: Last Monday.

PRODUCTION NOTES:

Can be performed by 5-20 actors (of any sex or ethnic group) playing all the roles. If working with more than five actors, the others can all become Phillipé's children, other royal advisors, etc., splitting the lines between them. The props and sets should be minimal, using everyday items to create spectacular theatrical effects.

SONG SELECTIONS

1. Little Iguana Phillipé, Jasmin, All
2. No One But Me Jasmin
3. He's Got Great Taste. Emperor, Chorus, All
4. These Clothes Buzz, Chorus
- 4A. He's Got Great Taste - Reprise Jasmin, Phillipé,
Peasants
5. The Emperor Has No Clothes! Phillipé, Jasmin, All

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

SETTING: *A bare stage representing a sunny island in the Caribbean.*

AT RISE: *Lights come up on FIVE ACTORS sitting on the stage looking at the AUDIENCE. A large blue cloth is stretched out before them. ACTOR #1 and #2 stand and silently move to the ends of the cloth, lift them, and begin to ripple the blue so it becomes water. ACTOR #3 stands and becomes a boat sailing on the water. ACTOR #4 and #5 stand—watch all this for a moment—then hop in the boat and begin fishing. ACTOR #4 begins humming a tune that will become the opening song.*

ACTOR #5. Tell me a story.

ACTOR #4. What?

ACTOR #5. Tell me a story. I'm bored.

ACTOR #4. Fishing not exciting enough anymore?

ACTOR #5. No. I want something fresh and new.

ACTOR #4. Well, these fish are pretty fresh. (*Taking a whiff of one.*) Well, most of them.

ACTOR #5. You know what I mean. I want something new. Something exciting.

ACTOR #4. I'll tell you a story.

ACTOR #5. Good.

ACTOR #4. It's an old story.

ACTOR #5. Oh.

ACTOR #4. It's about a whole island of people who wanted the latest and most exciting.

ACTOR #5. What island?

ACTOR #4. That one. Over there.

ACTOR #5. Which island is that?

ACTOR #4. That...is Little Iguana.

(The cloth drops and the actors explode into action—ACTOR #4 dancing forward to a calypso beat—becoming PHILLIPE, as ACTOR #5 becomes his daughter JASMIN.)

(SONG #1: LITTLE IGUANA)

PHILLIPE (*singing*).

**WELCOME TO OUR LITTLE PARADISE
WHERE EVERY DAY IS TWICE AS NICE
AS THE DAY BEFORE AND THE DAY BEHIND.
A NICER PLACE YOU'LL NEVER FIND,
BUT FINDING US CAN BE A CHORE,
BECAUSE THIS ISLAND IS NOT NEXT DOOR—
IT'S NOT TOO LONG, AND IT'S NOT TOO FAT,
IT'S RATHER SMALL, BUT WE LIKE IT LIKE
THAT!
NOW, NOW, NOW, SOME FOLKS LIKE TO GO TO
JAMAICA,
BERMUDA AND TOBAGO, TOO.
THERE ARE MANY PORTS OF CALL
BUT THE ONE THAT CALLS US ALL
IS CALLING, CALLING OUT TO YOU—
OH, YES, THE GREATEST SPECK OF SAND**

**IN THE WHOLE CARIBBEAN
IS THE ISLE ON WHICH YOU STAND
LITTLE IGUANA
LITTLE IGUANA!**

(They all dance in a conga line—partying like there's no tomorrow.)

PHILLIPE *(cont'd)*.

**YOU MAY THINK THAT WE LIKE TO GLOAT,
BUT SHOW ME AN ISLAND AS REMOTE!
IT TAKES WEEKS TO GET HERE, THERE'S NO
PHONE
THE PERFECT PLACE TO BE ALONE!**

JASMIN.

**WHO WANTS TO BE ALONE ANYWAY?
I WANT SOME FRIENDS, I WANT TO PLAY!**

PHILLIPE.

RELAXATION IS WHY THEY COME...

JASMIN.

I THINK RELAXING IS REALLY DUMB.

PHILLIPE.

**NOW, NOW, NOW, SOME FOLKS LIKE TO GO TO
JAMAICA,
BERMUDA AND TOBAGO, TOO.
THERE ARE MANY PORTS OF CALL
BUT THE ONE THAT CALLS US ALL
IS CALLING, CALLING OUT TO YOU—**

ALL.

**OH, YES, THE GREATEST SPECK OF SAND
IN THE WHOLE CARRIBEAN
IS THE ISLE ON WHICH YOU STAND
LITTLE IGUANA
LITTLE IGUANA!**

PHILLIPE (*to audience*). All right, you caught me. I'm the tourism board. My name is Phillipé Martín. And this is my darling daughter, Jasmin. Say hello, Jasmin.

JASMIN. Hi.

PHILLIPE. Welcome to our island of Little Iguana. We hope your stay here is an enjoyable one. You'll find the weather warm, the water blue, the beaches...empty...and the natives oh-so-friendly. And if you're lucky, you'll have the chance to meet our Emperor. He is such a... colorful...ruler. So, sit back, relax, and remember...

COMPANY.

**THE GREATEST SPECK OF SAND
IN THE WHOLE CARIBBEAN
IS THE ISLE ON WHICH WE STAND—
LITTLE IGUANA!!**

(They all dance.)

PHILLIPE. Not to be confused with...

ALL.

LITTLE BOTSWANA.

PHILLIPE. Or...

ALL.

TIJUANA.

PHILLIPE. Or...

ALL.

GUATAMALA.

PHILLIPE. We're talking about...

ALL.

LITTLE IGUANA!

PHILLIPE. Sing it with us now...

ALL.

LITTLE IGUANA!

PHILLIPE. One more time!

ALL.

LITTLE IGUANA!!

(The others dance off leaving JASMIN to spin into her father.)

JASMIN. Papa! Papa!

PHILLIPE. What is it, my darling daughter Jasmin?

JASMIN. Papa! Guess what today is!

PHILLIPE. Monday.

JASMIN. No! On this day, seven years ago, something very, very special happened.

PHILLIPE. The island got cable?

JASMIN. No! I was born!

PHILLIPE. No!

JASMIN. Yes! It's my birthday!

PHILLIPE. Well, you better tell those seagulls over there.

They seem to be destroying your birthday sandcastle.

JASMIN. Oh no! Bad gulls! Bad, bad gulls! *(She runs off-stage.)*

(PHILLIPE watches her go—smiles—and pulls out a beautiful sash.)

PHILLIPE. Look. Isn't it beautiful? A sash. For my darling daughter Jasmin. It's the greatest birthday gift I could get her. Because clothes are always the best gifts on Little Iguana. And this sash was personally recommended by the Emperor himself!

JASMIN *(O.S.)*. Papa! They weren't attacking my sandcastle. They were attacking little Jimmy Cliff's sandcastle!

PHILLIPE. Oop! *(To AUDIENCE.)* Here. Hide this—help me hide it!

JASMIN *(entering)*. Will you come play with...what are you doing?

PHILLIPE. Nothing! Nothing. *(To AUDIENCE.)* Shh!

JASMIN. Papa! Is that my birthday gift?

(She races for it, but PHILLIPE guides her off to another part of the audience.)

JASMIN *(cont'd., to AUDIENCE)*. Excuse me. Did my father leave something for me here?

(PHILLIPE has already retrieved the sash and moved it to another part of the audience. JASMIN moves quickly through the crowd searching with their help...PHILLIPE scrambles to keep it hidden... At last JASMIN finds it.)

JASMIN *(cont'd)*. Papa! It's beautiful! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

PHILLIPE *(to AUDIENCE)*. What did I tell you?

JASMIN. I'll wear it down to the beach! Come with me!

(A horrible conch shell blows offstage.)

PHILLIPE. Hooray! The Emperor!

JASMIN. Again?

(A manic calypso beat starts up. PHILLIPE and other PEASANTS charge around the stage rolling out a red cloth—pushing back palm leaves—brushing hair, checking breath, etc.—sweeping sand—setting up umbrellas to block the sun—as JASMIN follows her father around.)

JASMIN *(cont'd)*. Can't we miss him this once? I've already got my beautiful sash—come play with me—

PHILLIPE. Certainly. In a moment.

JASMIN. Why do you have to—

PHILLIPE *(moving her out of the way)*. Excuse me, darling daughter Jasmin.

JASMIN. But, Father, just because he's the Emperor—

PHILLIPE. Shh! Shh, darling daughter Jasmin. The Emperor's coming.

(The GRAND DUKE BARBADOS appears—dressed in fine flowing robes, holding a conch shell.)

BARBADOS. Mm, yes. Hear ye, hear ye, here he comes—the main man, the big enchilada, the muffin with the stuffin’—the Emperor! *(BARBADOS blows another horrible conch shell blow.)*

(The EMPEROR appears in a wildly expensive military uniform—medals, brocades, MacArthur hat, leather boots, the works.)

EMPEROR. That would be me. *(He lets out an unseemly giggle.)*

BARBADOS. Doesn't His Majesty look ravishing today?

PHILLIPE. Ravishing. Absolutely.

JASMIN. What's "ravishing"?

EMPEROR. Grand Duke Barbados?

BARBADOS. Mm, yes, Your Vastness?

EMPEROR. Runway, please!

BARBADOS. Oh, of course, sire, of course.

(Cheesy runway music starts up. The EMPEROR begins strutting down the red cloth like the worst international model.)

BARBADOS *(cont'd)*. His Majesty is sporting the Fall/Summer look today from Pierre Cardigan, including the daring new wrist-length folding sleeves and pants that flow from the hips to the ankles and beyond. The colors and textures are pure sassy, yet hint at the sleek sophistication of a soldier from Iowa. The boots are designed to

not only cover the delicate feet, but provide steadfast traction on those famous Little Iguana beaches.

(PHILLIPE claps accordingly and “oohs.” JASMIN looks at him like he’s insane.)

BARBADOS *(cont’d)*. And of course, who else could pull off this fresh look, but our very own Emperor!

(The EMPEROR glides off, waving, the cheesy music fading away. BARBADOS starts off as well.)

JASMIN. Can we go now?

BARBADOS *(turns around to face her)*. Oh dear.

PHILLIPE. What?

BARBADOS. That sash. Please. That sash went out of style twenty minutes ago! *(He leaves laughing.)*

(PHILLIPE looks at JASMIN...then starts to pull off her sash.)

JASMIN. Papa! What are you doing??

PHILLIPE. You heard the man. This is out. Over. Passé.

JASMIN. But I like it!

PHILLIPE. How can you like something that nobody else does?

(A light “island beat” starts up.)

(SONG #2: NO ONE BUT ME)

JASMIN (*singing*).

**PAPA, IT SEEMS
THAT ALL OF YOUR DREAMS FOR ME NOW
ARE NOTHING BUT SCHEMES
THAT THE EMPEROR DEEMS TO ALLOW.
BUT BEFORE YOU PUT MY IDEAS ON THE
SHELF,
PLEASE GIVE ME A CHANCE—JUST THIS
ONCE—
TO THINK FOR MYSELF.**

**I WANT TO DRESS LIKE NO ONE BUT ME!
I JUST DON'T CARE FOR THE FASHIONS I SEE
I WANT TO WEAR MY OWN CLOTHES—SING
MY OWN SONG...
AND WAIT FOR THE REST OF THE ISLAND TO
SING ALONG**

**FOLLOWING OTHERS
LIKE WE ARE SHEEP IN A FLOCK
HAS PUT THIS LAMB
BETWEEN A HARD PLACE AND A ROCK
'CAUSE I'VE GOT IDEAS
AND I HAVE MY OWN TASTE,
AND TO WEAR WHAT THEY'RE WEARING
JUST SEEMS LIKE SUCH A WASTE.**

**I WANT TO DRESS LIKE NO ONE BUT ME!
I JUST DON'T CARE FOR THE FASHIONS I SEE
I WANT TO WEAR MY OWN CLOTHES—SING
MY OWN SONG...
AND WAIT FOR THE REST OF THE ISLAND**

**I'LL WAIT FOR THE REST OF THE ISLAND
YES, WAIT FOR THE REST OF THE ISLAND TO
SING ALONG**

PHILLIPE. So what are you saying?

(Another horrible conch shell blast. PHILLIPE whips the sash off JASMIN—spinning her around. BARBADOS charges back on, clapping.)

BARBADOS. People! People! Fashion update!

PHILLIPE. Finally.

JASMIN. Papa—

BARBADOS. The Parisian season is here!

JASMIN. I thought it was the rainy season.

BARBADOS *(reading from a small card)*. Fresh from the Mid-April Fashion Fop—an exquisite little number off the streets of gay Pareé and into our humble homes...

(The EMPEROR flows back in wearing a long heavy purple scarf in addition to all his military gear. PHILLIPE claps and “oohs.”)

BARBADOS *(cont'd)*. Yes, scarves are in, in, in. Long enough to safely yank a crocodile out of your garden, yet short enough not to get caught in your bicycle spokes! And violet is back after an embarrassingly long absence from the runway.

PHILLIPE. I like the purple.

BARBADOS. Violet.

PHILLIPE. Violet.