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Dramatic Publishing

MISSISSIPPI PINOCCHIO

Book by
MARY HALL SURFACE

Lyrics by
DAVID MADDOX and MARY HALL SURFACE

Music by
DAVID MADDOX



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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Music and Lyrics by DAVID MADDOX

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(MISSISSIPPI PINOCCHIO)

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With special thanks to
Our Jack, Percy and Pinocchio
Dwayne Nitz

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Mississippi Pinocchio was commissioned by and premiered at the Theater of the First Amendment (George Mason University's professional theater, Fairfax, Va.) on March 13, 2002. Rick Davis, Artistic Director. Kevin Murray, Managing Director.

Directed by Mary Hall Surface
Music Direction by David Maddox

Scenic Design by James Kronzer
Costume Design by Jelena Vukmirovic
Lighting Design by Johnathan Blandin
Puppets and Crafts by Marie Schneggenburger
Properties by Karen Udell
Choreography by Dan Joyce
Fight Choreography by Brad Alan Waller
Dramaturgy by Kristin Johnsen-Neshati
Technical Direction by Ethan Osborn
Company Management by Kira Hoffmann
Stage Management by Lauren T. Hyland

The Ensemble:
Dori Legg, Sherri L. Edelen, Michael L. Forrest,
Jason Gilbert, Paul Takacs, Eric Lee Johnson,
Mildred Langford, Barbara Pinolini and
Dwayne Nitz as Pinocchio

The Band:
George Fulginiti-Shakar (piano)
John Good (trombone)
Matt Kanon (guitar/banjo)
Sarah Guthrie (clarinet/flute)
Ralph Gordon (bass)

AUTHORS' NOTES

For this the third in our “Great Stories” series, we have chosen as a source a piece of classic children’s literature which is of mythic proportions, with the flavor of fairy tale and fable and the strong bite of social satire. When one hears “Pinocchio,” generations of children and adults have a very specific image—one created by a certain cartoon in 1939 which has permeated our relationship to the story ever since. We conjure up the innocent little puppet, his singing cricket pal and the beautiful Blue Fairy who answers Gepetto’s prayers to have a son. Collodi’s Pinocchio is far from innocent. He is a willful, egotistical tyrant who smashes the singing cricket upon meeting him, who is carved by Gepetto for financial reasons rather than paternal ones (he needs the puppet to make money) and the Blue Fairy, who arrives late in the rogue-hero’s picaresque tale, cunningly disguises herself and tricks and traps Pinocchio into understanding what is truly required of him if he wants to become real. We like the original much better.

The Adventures of Pinocchio was written by Carlo Collodi as a serial in a children’s magazine in Tuscany in 1881. It was wildly popular but Collodi ended the series after only 15 episodes with the mischievous puppet left for dead hanging from an oak tree. There was such an outcry from his adoring readers that to continue the series he had to invent the Blue Fairy to bring the puppet back to life. (The first of several cycles of death and rebirth Pinocchio endures.) Collodi continued for over 20 more installments, which were together published as a book in 1883. Published in English in 1889, it was vastly popular in turn-of-the-century America.

A fierce supporter of Italy’s new democracy, Collodi believed that the good of the whole is built upon the right actions of its

parts. Pinocchio's journey is, in many ways, a metaphor of what is required of a person to become a good member of the community. Because no community fascinates us more than the American south, our Pinocchio is carved by an Italian immigrant, Gepetta, who arrives in the Mississippi river town of Natchez circa 1910 dreaming of the good life in America. With her comes her guardian angel, Speranza (which means "hope" in Italian). In *Mississippi Pinocchio*, our bad good boy must grow to understand how freedom and opportunity are leavened by compassion and responsibility. He must choose how to live in a world of wild adventures and harsh realities. America, founded on the hope of liberty and equality, is on that same journey from self-absorbed, willfully wooden-headed child to compassionate, responsible, community-minded adult.

Our play's music is in the style of Dixieland and is written for piano, trombone, clarinet/flute double, banjo/guitar double and bass. It is available either as a full score or as a recording (piano only).

— Mary Hall Surface and David Maddox

* * * *

Mississippi Pinocchio is the third of Surface & Maddox's "Great Stories" series, the first two being *Sing Down the Moon: Appalachian Wonder Tales* and *Perseus Bayou*. The scripts as well as the award-winning original cast recordings are available from Dramatic Publishing.

MISSISSIPPI PINOCCHIO

A Musical in Two Acts

For 5m., 4w. playing multiple roles.*

Can be expanded to a cast of 15 to 25.**

* *Mississippi Pinocchio* was originally produced with nine actors (5 men and 4 women). Casting was as follows:

Man One: Pinocchio

Woman One: Gepetta

Woman Two: Townsperson with package
Puppet
Speranza (Nurse, Lawyer, Old Woman)
Schoolteacher

Woman Three: Cat
Nose
Jury
Pupil 2

Man Two: Fox
Nose
Polecat
Jury
Pupil 3

Man Three: Boatman
Fire-eater
Tree with Night-Birds
Dr. Duck
Woodpecker
Polecat

Ape Judge
Pupil
Police Dog
Circus Crowd

Man Four: Lampwick
Puppet Tree with Night-Birds
Dr. Opossum
Woodpecker
Polecat
Jury
Circus Crowd

Man Five: Cop
Dime-store Owner
Puppet 1
Tree with Night-Birds
Dr. Boll Weevil
Woodpecker
Sharecropper
Pupil 1
Ringmaster

Woman Four: Food-seller
Cricket
Puppet 2
Bird
Jury
Pupil 4
Woman from Crowd

** Licensing allows for producers to cast more than nine actors.

CHARACTERS

Gepetta - a recently-arrived Immigrant from Italy
Boatman - on the steamboat that brings Gepetta to Natchez
Fox - a swindler
Cat - a fancy lady, but a schemer
Food-seller - a poor merchant on the riverfront
Lampwick - the baddest boy in Natchez
Cop - keeps order in Natchez
Speranza - Gepetta's angel of hope
Pinocchio - willful little puppet who longs to be real
Cricket - a short-lived advisor to Pinocchio
Dime-store Owner - pragmatic river-front businessman
Fire-eater - empresario of a traveling puppet show
Puppets - Mr. Fire-eater's performers
Dr. Duck - the "quack" doctor who treats Pinocchio
Dr. Opossum - a colleague of Dr. Duck's
Dr. Boll Weevil - a colleague of Dr. Duck's
Sharecropper - imprisons Pinocchio
Polecats - attempt to lure Pinocchio into mischief
Ape Judge and Jury - preside over Pinocchio's trial
Schoolteacher - presides over the classroom
Pupils - Pinocchio's classmates
Police Dog - pursues and then befriends Pinocchio
Ringmaster - presides over the circus
Woman from the Crowd - buys the donkey Pinocchio

Actors also used to create the nose transformation, wood-peckers, a bird, night-bird trees, the river, the shark and its interior.

PLEASE NOTE:

In this script, the cue numbers (i.e. **QA20**) correspond to the cue numbers on the recorded version (piano only) of the score that is available to rent should a producer not be able to use a live band.

These same cue numbers are also listed in the Full Score, which contains all music, text and stage directions. The Vocal Score and Piano-Vocal Score also contain cue numbers and full text.

The placement of the cue number indicates the beginning of the cue. The **#** sign indicates where the music ends. See the example below:

GEPETTA

“Did I make him ears?”

QA20

PINOCCHIO

NOW THAT I’M FREE

AND ON MY OWN

THERE’S A LONG LIST OF THINGS

THAT I’M GONNA DO

(PINOCCHIO runs from GEPETTA.)

CHORUS

WIDE-OPEN SCENERY

NOBODY STAND IN FRONT OF ME!

NO RESPONSIBILITY

THE LAND OF THE FREE!

LAMPWICK

“Ain’t no puppet gonna out-bad me!”

#

LAMPWICK (cont’d)

“Hey, Pine-boy. Catch.”

QA21

QA25 (con’t) indicates that the recorded cue continues to play.

QA7** indicates a track for rehearsal purposes only. In performance, the CD is not stopped at this point.

ACT I

OVERTURE (OPTIONAL)

QA1

#

OPENING

QA2

(Lights up on the bustling river town of Natchez, Mississippi. A big steamboat has just pulled into the dock. The CAT (a fancy lady), the FOX (a swindler), LAMPWICK (a troublesome boy), the BOATMAN, a COP, and FOOD-SELLER all welcome the exciting arrival of the steamboat. Goods are unloaded, deals are struck. River-front commerce in action!)

CHORUS

'TIS A GRAND DAY
AMERICA!
IT'S MY PAY DAY!
I'M TELLING YA
THAT THE BAND PLAYS
ON AMERICA'S MAIN STREET!
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER
MY HOME!

LIVING ON THE RIVER
I FEEL SO FREE

NOBODY'S GOING TO SEPARATE
MY MONEY AND ME

BIG BOAT BIG RIVER
DONE SAILED RIGHT DOWN
GET AWAY SWEAT, GET AWAY TOIL
AND MAKE SOME MONEY IN TOWN
AMERICA

(GEPETTA, a poor Italian immigrant, arrives in the New World. She plops her bag down and everything stops.)

QA3**

GEPETTA

AMERICA
TOOK A SHIP ACROSS THE SEA
SAID GOODBYE TO ITALY!
THEN A TRAIN THAT TOOK FOREVER
TO A STEAMBOAT ON THIS RIVER
TILL I FLOAT
TO WHERE I ALWAYS DREAMED TO BE

#

BOATMAN

NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI!

QA4

(GEPETTA gives a delighted shrug, as if to say, "Well, why not?" Town comes to life again. GEPETTA moves through the crowd.)

CHORUS

WIDE-OPEN SCENERY
THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY!

NOBODY STAND IN FRONT OF ME
THE LAND OF THE FREE!

GEPETTA
THE STREETS ARE PAVED WITH GOLD
I'M AT THE GATES OF HEAVEN
I DON'T SEE ANY GOLD YET
BUT THE DOOR TO HOPE IS OPEN
TO DREAMS THAT I'LL NEVER STOP HOPING
WILL SEE ME THROUGH

BOATMAN
HARD ROAD

CHORUS
GIMME SOME MONEY

(GEPETTA shows the CAT a letter.)

FOX & CAT
HEAVY LOAD

GEPETTA
OH IT'S HOT AND SUNNY

(The CAT takes her letter; the FOX hands her keys to her new room, LAMPWICK takes her bundle.)

CHORUS
THE STEAM HEAT'S HUMMING
THE WATER'S ALL A SHIMMER!
WHEN THE BOAT SHE LANDS IN NATCHEZ

I'LL MAKE MY FORTUNE THAT'S A FACT!
'TIS A GRAND DAY

GEPETTA

“Speranza, wish me luck!”

(GEPETTA opens her carpetbag with her statues.)

CHORUS

I GOT MY DREAMS TO DELIVER

GEPETTA

In Italy, Gepetta had learned to carve beautiful
figures of wood.

CHORUS

THE STEAM HEAT'S HUMMING

GEPETTA

She sold them in the market of her village.

CHORUS

THE WATER'S ALL A SHIMMER!

GEPETTA

Gepetta knew the good people of Natchez would
buy all the statues she had to sell.

CHORUS

WHEN THE BOAT SHE LANDS IN NATCHEZ
I'LL MAKE MY FORTUNE THAT'S A FACT!

GEPETTA

Soon she would live in a Southern palace on the
river with tall white columns and a wide front
porch!

(GEPETTA has her carved Statue of Liberty to sell.)

CHORUS

AMERICA!
IT'S MY PAY DAY!
AMERICA!
THE BAND PLAYS
ON AMERICA'S MAIN STREET!
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER
MY HOME!

(GEPETTA approaches the FOOD-SELLER.)

CHORUS (cont'd)

I GOT MY BAGGAGE IN TOW
THE MOTOR'S SHE'S RUNNING

*(The FOOD-SELLER has no money to buy a Statue of
Liberty.)*

GEPETTA

Gepetta thought everyone in America was rich.

CHORUS

THAT BIG OLD WHEEL'S A TURNING
UP THE RIVER SHE'LL BE CHURNING

(But the FRUIT-SELLER tosses GEPETTA a piece of fruit.)

QA5**

GEPETTA

NO MORE
DAYS OF HUNGER, OF LONGING
NO MORE
SUMMERS WITHOUT RAIN
WINTERS WITHOUT FOOD
I'M IN AMERICA, MISSISSIPPI!

(GEPETTA goes out into the town trying to sell her statues, but the TOWNSPEOPLE do not buy.)

CHORUS

HARD ROAD
GIMME SOME MONEY

GEPETTA

“Would you like to buy?”

CHORUS

HEAVY LOAD
OH IT'S HOT AND SUNNY

GEPETTA

“La Statua Liberta!”

CHORUS

BUT WHEN THE BOAT SHE LANDS IN
NATCHEZ

GEPETTA

“I’ll make my fortune that’s a fact?”

(GEPETTA tries again and again, but the TOWNSPEOPLE ignore her.)

CHORUS

’TIS A GRAND DAY
AMERICA!
IT’S MY PAY DAY!
AMERICA!
THE BAND PLAYS
ON AMERICA’S MAIN STREET!
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER
MY HOME!

(GEPETTA becomes more weary and confused.)

GEPETTA

Gepetta did not understand. Day after day, week upon week, no one would buy.

CHORUS

LIVING ON THE RIVER
I FEEL SO FREE

GEPETTA

Few people would even speak to her.

CHORUS

NOBODY’S GOING TO SEPARATE
MY MONEY FROM ME

QA6**

GEPETTA

Soon she was as poor as she had ever been in
Italy. Gepetta's hope for the good life in
America grew dim.

HARD ROAD

CHORUS

GIMME SOME MONEY

GEPETTA

HEAVY LOAD

CHORUS

OH IT'S HOT AND SUNNY

*(LAMPWICK sneaks up behind GEPETTA and steals the
Statue of Liberty she is trying to sell.)*

GEPETTA

“*Auito!* Thief! Stop! Stop him!”

(A melee erupts.)

CHORUS

GIMME SOME MONEY

GIMME SOME MONEY

GIMME SOME MONEY

GIMME SOME MONEY

*(Everyone is grabbing their goods, protecting what is
theirs, ignoring GEPETTA's pleas for help. The FOX
points out LAMPWICK to the COP, then steals the*

COP's wallet. COP chases LAMPWICK off. The POLICE DOG enters and chases her. ALL exit but GEPETTA.)

QA7**

SCENE ONE

(GEPETTA is alone in the street.)

GEPETTA
THESE STREETS ARE PAVED WITH GOLD
THAT'S WHAT I WAS TOLD
AND THAT THE DOOR TO HOPE STANDS OPEN
TO DREAMS THAT I'LL NEVER STOP HOPING

(SPERANZA appears in the sunbeams.)

GEPETTA (cont'd)
SPERANZA, CAN YOU SEE ME?
MY ANGEL OF HOPE

SPERANZA
YOUR ANGEL OF HOPE

GEPETTA
ON YOUR WINGS
YOU CARRIED ME

SPERANZA
DEAR GEPETTA

GEPETTA & SPERANZA
TO AMERICA

SPERANZA
YOUR NEW HOME

GEPETTA
HOLD ME IN YOUR WINGS

SPERANZA
I'LL SING YOU MY SONG

GEPETTA & SPERANZA
ANGEL OF
HOPE LIGHT MY/YOUR WAY

#

(The POLICEMAN's billy club rolls into GEPETTA's sight.)

QA8

#

GEPETTA (cont'd)
“The stick of the town policeman. This I get in answer to my prayers?”

QA9

(When GEPETTA reaches for it, the billy club jumps out of her grasp. SPERANZA chuckles delightedly.)

#

GEPETTA (cont'd)

“Che cosa?”

QA10

(She stoops and picks it up, but the club jumps wildly in her hand.)

GEPETTA (cont'd)

“A piece of wood with a mind of its own?
Come back here!”

(She grabs it, holding it still.)

#

GEPETTA (cont'd)

“I’ll make you jump...for me!”

QA11

(SPERANZA, smiling, disappears as GEPETTA rushes to the small room where she lives. The actor PINOCCHIO appears and sits with his back upstage. She begins to carve. With each line of the song, the actor animates his arms and legs as she carves.)

GEPETTA (cont'd)

A PERFECT LITTLE AMERICAN BOY
WITH ONE ARM, THEN TWO
I’LL GIVE YOU EYES THAT SHINE
HERE’S ONE LEG, I’M ALMOST THROUGH
THERE’LL BE
NO MORE
DAYS OF HUNGER, OF LONGING
NO MORE
NIGHTS WITHOUT DREAMS

WEEKS WITHOUT HOPE
HOW COULD ANYONE DENY HIM
I COULD LIVE MY LIFE BESIDE HIM

#

GEPETTA (cont'd)

“He’ll earn me money
My little American!”

QA12

(With a diving somersault, the actor PINOCCHIO moves from upstage of GEPETTA to sprawling next to her on the floor. He has perfect red circles on his cheeks.)

#

GEPETTA (cont'd)

“Naughty wooden eyes, why are you looking at me? Ah, you want a mouth to tell everyone to throw money to you!”

QA13

(As soon as she carves his mouth. PINOCCHIO starts to laugh.)

#

GEPETTA (cont'd)

“Stop laughing.”

(He doesn't.)

“I might as well speak to the wall. Stop, you piece of pine. Behave.”

QA14

(PINOCCHIO stops laughing, but sticks out his tongue.)

#

(GEPETTA sees, but pretends not to see, and begins to carve his feet.)

QA15

(PINOCCHIO snatches her scarf and puts it on his own neck.)

#

GEPETTA (cont'd)

“Rascal! Not finished and already you disobey me. Stand up!”

QA16

(The billy club becomes the stick from which PINOCCHIO is “strung.”)

GEPETTA (cont'd)

PICCOLO PINE SEED. PINOCCHIO!

#

“Do you like that name, puppet?”

QA17

(GEPETTA makes him nod his head.)

#

GEPETTA (cont'd)

“Mississippi Pinocchio!
Now do what I say. Walk!”

QA18

(PINOCCHIO walks stiffly at first. GEPETTA operates him around the room. He gets good at it quickly.)

GEPETTA (cont'd)

“Turn. Dance. Very good!”

(He dances as she sings.)

GEPETTA (cont'd)

THE STREETS ARE PAVED WITH GOLD
THAT'S WHAT I CAME HERE HOPING
THE DOOR TO HOPE STANDS OPEN—AHH!

(But PINOCCHIO breaks free of his “strings” and runs out the door into the town.)

GEPETTA (cont'd)

“Bad puppet! Come back here!!!”