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Dramatic Publishing

Aesop's Fable-ous Christmas Tree



Comedy
by Michael Gravois



Aesop's Fable-ous Christmas Tree

Comedy. By Michael Gravois. *Cast: 8 to 50 gender-neutral roles.* When Aesop's fables are given a holiday spin, you'll get a mash-up of *The Twelve Days of Christmas* and *The Tortoise and the Hare*, where the six birds of Christmas compete in a comical race—with the turtle dove winning, of course; a tiny snow mouse teaches the abominable snowman that little friends may prove great friends; Ebenezer Scrooge realizes that wealth unused might as well not exist; Santa's elves dream of a life outside the workshop as they sing a "patter poem" about their ideal careers; and even though the eight reindeer panic when Rudolph gets a cold in the nose, they learn that necessity is the mother of invention. A dozen vignettes illuminate important life lessons by reinventing the classic fables, blending humor, rhythmic elements, rapping, puppetry, poetry, song and storytelling to create a fast-paced, fun-filled show that's filled with Christmas spirit. *Single set. Optional sound effects/music CD available. Approximate running time: 1 hour. Code: AJ9.*

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AESOP'S FABLE-OUS CHRISTMAS TREE

By
MICHAEL GRAVOIS



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For Stephen Hancock

Aesop's Fable-ous Christmas Tree premiered on December 3, 2011, at the Circuit Playhouse, Jackie Nichols, executive director, in Memphis, Tennessee, with the following artists:

CAST

Davis Fancher
Jason Gerhard
Marc Gill
Lyric Peters Malkin
Daniel L. Martin
Justin G. Nelson
Carole JaiMese Presley
Lena Wallace

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director Michael Gravois
Scenic Designer Jay Deen
Costume Designer Nicholas Bursoni
Lighting Designer Colin Chauche
Sound Designer David Shipley
Puppet Designer Alex Nahon
Original Music and Music Director Renée Kemper
Technical Director Kat De Camillo
Touring Stage Manager Karin Barile
Circuit Playhouse Stage Manager Kendra Watkins

AESOP'S FABLE-OUS CHRISTMAS TREE

ACTORS 1-8 PLAY THE FOLLOWING ROLES: *

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Actors 1-8	
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Elves 1-8	
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Actors 1-8	
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Actors 1-8	

* CASTING: The play calls for a cast of eight, but if you cast each scene independently you can have as many as 50 different actors. The cast can be any age, sex or race.

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THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

(SQ#4: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT entrance music; ACTOR 1 entrance music; ornament shatter

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT enters and ducks behind one of the large boxes. ACTOR 1 enters, carrying a large ornament that looks like it's made of glass. She trips and drops the ornament. [CHRISTMAS SPIRIT can catch it upstage of the box.] ACTOR 1 sits down and cries.

SQ#5: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT entrance glissando

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT appears.)

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Why, what troubles you so during this time of joy, my friend?

ACTOR 1. I dropped an ornament that my grandpa gave me, and it shattered into a million pieces. Now it's lost forever. *(Continues crying.)*

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Cry not, my child, for I am Christmas Spirit. I will work my magic and put your ornament back together so it's...just...like...new!

(SQ#6: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT disappearance and reappearance glissando

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT dives behind the gift box and reappears holding a beautiful golden ornament.)

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Here. I have created this ornament made of solid gold. Is this the ornament you broke?

ACTOR 1. No, that's not my ornament. *(Cries.)*

(SQ#7: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT disappearance and reappearance glissando

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT dives behind the box and reappears holding a beautiful silver ornament.)

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Here. I have created this ornament made of solid silver. Could *this* be your ornament?

ACTOR 1. No, that's not my ornament either. *(Cries.)*

(SQ#8: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT disappearance and reappearance glissando)

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT dives behind the gift box a third time and reappears with an ornament just like the one ACTOR 1 broke.)

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Here. I have created this ornament made of fragile glass. Is *this* the ornament you broke?

ACTOR 1. Yes! Yes! That's the ornament I broke. *(Hugs CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.)* Thank you! Oh, thank you, Christmas Spirit!

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. You are an honest child. To reward you, I will not only give you this ornament but I will give you the golden ornament and the silver ornament as well. Merry Christmas.

ACTOR 1. Merry Christmas, Christmas Spirit! And thanks! Wait'll I tell my friends!

(ACTOR 1 runs off to tell others what has happened. CHRISTMAS SPIRIT smiles and dives behind the gift box.)

SQ#9: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT disappearance glissando

ACTOR 2 peeks out from behind the tree and enters carrying a glass ornament.

SQ#10: ACTOR 2 entrance music; ornament shatter

He looks around, sees that the coast is clear, and “trips,” dropping his ornament.)

ACTOR 2. Ooops. *(He sits down and cries, but not very convincingly.)* Oh, boo hoo. Oh, boo hoo hoo. *(Nothing happens. ACTOR 2 looks around and begins to “cry” even louder.)* I said...OH, BOO HOO! OH, BOO HOO HOO!!!

(SQ#11: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT appearance glissando

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT appears.)

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Why, what troubles you so during this time of joy, my friend?

ACTOR 2. I dropped my *faaa*avorite ornament and it shattered into a million, billion, gazillion pieces. *(Cries loudly.)* Oh, boo hoo. Oh, boo hoo hoo!!

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Cry not, my child, for I am Christmas Spirit. I will work my magic and put your ornament back together so it's...just...like...new!

(SQ#12: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT disappearance and reappearance glissando

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT dives behind the gift box and reappears holding a beautiful golden ornament.)

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Here. I have created this ornament made of solid gold. Could this be the ornament you broke?

ACTOR 2. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah! *That is the ornament I broke!!! (Reaches for the ornament.)*

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT *(pulls ornament away)*. Not so fast! I can tell that you are lying. To punish you for not being truthful, I will not only keep this ornament but I will leave yours smashed in a million, billion, gazillion pieces.

(SQ#13: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT disappearance glissando

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT dives behind the gift. ACTOR 1 enters and crosses to ACTOR 2.)

ACTOR 1. Honesty is the best policy.

(SQ#14: Lively music

ACTORS hug and run to a present downstage. ACTOR 2 opens it and shows the underside of the lid to the audience, where the moral is written.)

ACTOR 2. Honesty is the best policy.

(ACTOR 2 sets down lid so moral can be seen. ACTOR 1 takes out an ornament shaped like a golden ornament and holds it up for the audience to see. ACTOR 2 knocks on the gift box where CHRISTMAS SPIRIT is hiding.

SQ#15: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT reappears glissando; lively music for hanging ornament; disappearance glissando

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT appears, takes the ornament from ACTOR 1 and hangs it on the tree. ACTORS wave to CHRISTMAS SPIRIT and exit. CHRISTMAS SPIRIT dives behind the gift again and stays there until the end of the next scene.)

COMMON SCENTS

(ROYAL GUARDS 1 and 2 enter humming and rearrange boxes.

SQ#16: Fanfare

KING and QUEEN enter. KING holds a large candle and sets it on a box. ROYAL GUARDS stand in the background.)

KING. My Queen, I have developed a new scent for this year's Royal Christmas Candle. Don't you think it smells *divine*?

QUEEN (*takes a whiff and gags*). Oh, my King, that is the foulest, rankest scent that ere I smelt!

KING. It is not.

QUEEN. It is too.

KING. Is not.

QUEEN. Is too.

KING. Is not.

QUEEN. Is too.

KING. Not.

QUEEN. Too.

KING. Not.

QUEEN. Too.

KING. Not.

QUEEN. Too! Hmmmph!

KING. Well, if it smells so bad, how come none of my subjects have said so? Hmmm? GUARDS! Bring me a subject! Pronto!

ROYAL GUARDS. Duh-ho. Duh-ho. Duh-ho.

(ROYAL GUARDS make a continuous circle around Christmas tree, muttering the whole way. They reenter, carrying a large math book and history book.)

ROYAL GUARD 1. Which thubject would you like, Thire? *(i.e., Which subject would you like, Sire?)*

KING. Not *that* kind of subject, fools. One of my plebes!

ROYAL GUARDS. Ooooooh! Duh-ho. Duh-ho. Duh-ho.

(ROYAL GUARDS circle tree and reenter accompanied by ROYAL SUBJECT 1.)

KING. Please, my underling, tell me what *you* think of the scent of this year's Royal Christmas Candle. *(Looks at QUEEN with conceit.)*

ROYAL SUBJECT 1 *(takes a whiff and gags)*. Pee-yoo, Sire! That is the rankest scent that ere I smelt!

KING *(incensed)*. Guards! Lock him up!

(ROYAL GUARDS take paper chains off Christmas tree and tie hands of ROYAL SUBJECT 1.)

ROYAL SUBJECT 1. But, but, but, but...ooooh.

KING. Guards! Bring me another subject! Pronto!

ROYAL GUARDS. Duh-ho. Duh-ho. Duh-ho.

(ROYAL GUARDS circle tree and reenter, carrying a large reading book and a large spelling book.)

ROYAL GUARD 2. Which thubject would you like, Thire?

KING. Not *that* kind of subject, fools. One of my plebes!

ROYAL GUARDS. Ooooooh! Duh-ho. Duh-ho. Duh-ho.

(ROYAL GUARDS circle tree and reenter accompanied by ROYAL SUBJECT 2.)

KING. Please, my underling, tell me what *you* think of the scent of this year's Royal Christmas Candle.

(ROYAL SUBJECT 2 steps toward candle. Stops. Sees ROYAL SUBJECT 1 in chains. Takes a whiff. His face contorts as he tries to control his disgust.)

ROYAL SUBJECT 2. Oh, Sire, that is the sweetest scent that ere I smelt. Why it smells like rose petals and rain on a summer day. It smells like...

KING. You are lying! I can tell! Guards! Lock him up!

(ROYAL GUARDS wrap paper chains around hands of ROYAL SUBJECT 2.)

ROYAL SUBJECT 2. But, but, but, but...ooooh.

KING. Guards! Bring me another subject! Pronto!

ROYAL GUARDS. Duh-ho. Duh-ho. Duh-ho.

(ROYAL GUARDS begin to exit around tree.)

KING. And I DON'T mean science!!!

ROYAL GUARDS *(stop. Look at each other)*. Oh, oh, oh,
oh, oh.

*(ROYAL GUARDS circle tree and reenter accompanied
by ROYAL SUBJECT 3.)*

KING. Please, my underling, tell me what *you* think of the
scent of this year's Royal Christmas Candle.

*(ROYAL SUBJECT 3 notices ROYAL SUBJECTS 1 and
2 in chains. Whips out a handkerchief.)*

ROYAL SUBJECT 3. Oh, Tire, I hab da wort code in my
dose. I cat mell a ting. *(i.e., Oh, Sire, I have the worst
cold in my nose. I can't smell a thing.)*

*(QUEEN looks at KING in victory. KING shrugs.
ROYAL SUBJECTS 1 and 2 look at the audience and
step forward, saying...)*

ROYAL SUBJECTS 1 & 2. If you can't say anything nice,
don't say anything at all.

(SQ#17: Fanfare

Trumpet fanfare begins to play again. QUEEN steps forward, opens a present downstage and shows underside of lid to audience, where the moral is written.)

QUEEN. If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all.

(QUEEN sets down lid so moral can be seen. She pulls out an ornament shaped like a Christmas candle and holds it up for the audience to see.

SQ#18: Fanfare interrupted

QUEEN heads toward tree but is interrupted by CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.)

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Hey, hey, wait a minute. Waaaaiiit a minuuuuuute!!! Hey! *(Looks at sound booth and moves hand across her throat, meaning "cut the music." Fanfare stumbles and stops.)* WHAT'S the moral of that story?

KING. Ummm...if you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all?

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. But the moral of *my* story was "Honesty is the best policy." When he *(indicating ROYAL SUBJECT 1)* told the truth, you put him in chains. So is honesty the best policy or not?

KING. Guards! Put her in chains!

ROYAL GUARDS. Duh-ho. Duh-ho. Duh-ho.

(ROYAL GUARDS drag CHRISTMAS SPIRIT offstage. KING indicates for fanfare to start again.

SQ#19: Fanfare; intro to "Twelve Days;" twelve drummers; eleven pipers; ten lords

KING takes ornament from QUEEN and hangs it on the tree. Everyone rearranges the boxes for the next scene and exits. Fanfare transitions into the final verse of the carol "The Twelve Days of Christmas.")