

EEK!

A Children's Musical for Christmas

Music by Richard Shephard • Lyrics by Mark Schweizer • Production Notes by Carol McClure

Cast

Innkeeper (Adult)..... Baritone
Innkeeper's Wife (Adult) Soprano
Mother-In-Law Mute (could be played by a man)
Mary Mute (could be played by a child)
Joseph..... Mute (could be played by a child)

Villagers (travelling to Bethlehem and staying at the inn) Children's Chorus (grades 2-7)

Chorus of Mice (Children ages 3ish-5) Non-singing
Ideally (but not necessarily) should be able to "EEK." Must be able to look cute in a mouse costume.

The following carols have been used in EEK!

I Saw Thee Ships (Traditional English)
Wassail Carol (Traditional English)
Away In A Manger (J.E. Spilman)
Joseph liebe, Joseph mein (Traditional German)
The Holly and the Ivy (Traditional English)
O Little Town of Bethlehem (Phillips Brooks and Lewis Redner)

This musical lasts 16 minutes (unless the mice get away!)

A Note from the Composer

EEK! celebrates Christmas, in particular the virtues of hospitality, as exemplified by the innkeeper, who, despite his wife's selfishness, welcomes the Holy Family to the stable in Bethlehem. The musical also points out, in a light-hearted fashion, the penalties of meanness and extravagance which the innkeeper's wife and her mother display.

The two adult solo roles can be played by competent amateurs. The range of both parts has been kept within reasonable limits. The chorus parts are not difficult, based on Christmas Carols, and can be memorized with little difficulty. The EEKING Chorus is made up of smaller children. If they can EEK, they're in!

The heart of the musical is the contrast between the innkeeper and his wife. The innkeeper should be portrayed as a down-trodden worker, and his costume should be that of a servant. His wife, on the other hand, should be extravagantly dressed in a ridiculously opulent manner; gold lamé, huge hat, veils, etc. The mother-in-law should be similarly attired. It is important to stress the farcical nature of their self-absorption, so they must be caricatures rather than portraits.

Mary, Joseph and the singing chorus can be seen as part of a Nativity play.

Production Notes - page 22

Chorus Parts - page 24

On the CD

Track 1 - Entire Musical (16 minutes)
Track 2 - We're Travelling
Track 3 - Innkeeper Song (with chorus)
Track 4 - Star Carol
Track 5 - Star Carol reprise
Track 6 - O Little Town of Bethlehem

(The EEKING Chorus on the CD is courtesy of First Methodist Church Daycare, Hopkinsville, KY.)

Cover Art: Chris Schweizer

For Kathleen and David Atkinson

EEK!

A Children's Musical for Christmas

Lyrics by Mark Schweizer

Music by Richard Shephard

Andante ♩ = 80 *Enter Chorus - Travellers staying at the inn*

Piano

Choir

f We're tra - vel - ing from far and near to Beth - le - hem, to Beth - le - hem, The
jour - ney is to Dav - id's town, to Beth - le - hem, to Beth - le - hem, We'll

Choir

jour - ney's long, the road is clear, to Beth - le - hem in Ju - de - a.
tra - vel up the hills and down, to Beth - le - hem in Ju - de - a.

Choir

We cross the moun - tains, and the seas, to Beth - le - hem, to Beth - le - hem, Our
To count us is the plan in - deed, in Beth - le - hem, in Beth - le - hem, To

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Choir

chil - dren and our fam - i - lies, To Beth - le - hem in Ju - de - a.
 tax as Cae - sar has de - creed, in Beth - le - hem in Ju - de - a.

28

Choir

Our It's cold, the nights are

1. 2.

33

Choir

fros - ty there, in Beth - le - hem in Beth - le - hem, so bring a coat and have a care, in

38

Choir

Beth - le - hem in Ju - de - a.

45

Choir

So join us in our trav - el - ing, to Beth - le - hem, to

51

Choir

Beth - le-hem, our mu - sic and our re - vel-ling, in Beth - le-hem in Ju - de -

56

The Innkeeper comes out and greets the guests

Choir

a.

62

A little faster ♩. = 90

I.K.

I am the keep - er of this house, A ti - dy litt - le inn I
inn is quick - ly fil - ling, but you're wel - come one and all You'll

67

I.K.

clean the rooms from dawn to dusk and then be - gin a - gain.
find ac - com - mo - da - tion just up - stairs down the hall.

Choir

Love and joy come to

71

Choir

you and to you good for-tune too, And God bless you and send you a hap - py New

74

I.K.

Choir

Year, and God send you a hap - py New Year.

Our Your

1. 2.

78

I.K.

don - key will be safe with us, He will not come to harm We'll put him in the

83

I.K.

Choir

sta - ble where he'll be nice and warm.

Love and joy come to you and to you...

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87 **Più mosso** *quasi recit:*

Wife *f* It real ly is a both-er To have these peo-ple here.

I.K. My

92 *agitato*

Wife I

I.K. dear, they have no-where to stay the town's so full this year.

96 *meno mosso*

Wife can't be both-ered with them, you treat them as you will. Just re-mem-ber Mo-ther's vis-it-ing

100

Wife And she's been ve-ry ill.

Rit.

Tempo di Habañera (with veils!) ♩ = 110

104 *Molto espressivo*

Wife

She'll need a vel - vet pil - low to put her feet up - on; And

109

Wife

sev - en silk - en blan - kets to use un - til she's gone. Her break - fast shall be

114

Wife

quails' eggs. Two doz - en at the least, with cav - i - ar and

118

Wife

Steak Tar - tare to fin - ish off the feast. She'll

122

Wife

want three rooms with ser - vants. She does - n't like to share, or

126

Wife

have to mix with com-mon folk com - ing down the stair. And

130

Wife

for her en - ter - tain - ment; Three dan - cers and a mime. As

134

Wife

pa - geants go, it's quite a show, I think it all sub - lime!

138

I.K.

My dear, I'm sure I've saved the rooms and done as you've re-quired. But

142

Wife *No, no!*

I.K. do you think you'd lend a hand? I'm feel - ing ve - ry tired.

146

Wife *I'm far too bu - sy; I've shopp - ing left to do. I real-ly*

150

Wife *need a brand new cloak, per-haps some jew-el-ry too. And mark my*

154

Wife *words you lit - tle man. No more guests to - day. The inn is full. If*

159

Wife

some - one comes, you turn them straight a - way

I.K.

Yes, yes, my dear, I un-der-

163

I.K.

stand. I'll do just as you say. If some-one comes this frost-y night I'll

167

Wife

And one more thing be -

I.K.

turn them straight a - way. *[maus motif]*

Mice peep out (unseen by inkeeper's wife)

170

Wife

fore I go, while clean - ing out the house, look

173

Wife

care - ful - ly, look high and low. I thought I saw a mouse! I

177

Wife

thought I saw a mouse! I thought I saw a mouse! If

agitato
(big chest voice)

181

Wife

Moth - er sees a mouse at all, her nerves will all give way. She'll

185

Wife

lock her-self in - to her room, and won't come out for days.

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189 *Meno mosso* ***ff*** *A tempo*

Wife

So kill the mice with care. And

192 *rit.*

Wife

no more guests, not ev - en one, We have no room to spare!

I.K.

parlando My

196 *a little quicker*

I.K.

dear, I think we have some room in yon - der stall.

199

Wife

No! we have no room at all!

*Innkeeper's wife leaves.
Mice start to emerge.*

8va

Eeking Chorus

MICE ENTER SAYING.....EEK!

Allegro (in 1)

202

Musical notation for measures 202-208. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key of D major. The melody consists of eighth notes with accents and slurs. The bass line is mostly rests.

209

8^{va}

Musical notation for measures 209-214. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key of D major. The melody is marked 8^{va} and features a triplet of eighth notes. The bass line has a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

215 (8)

Musical notation for measures 215-220. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key of D major. The melody features a triplet of eighth notes. The bass line has a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

221 (8)

3

Musical notation for measures 221-225. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key of D major. The melody features a triplet of eighth notes. The bass line has a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

226 (8)

(optional repeat as needed)

Musical notation for measures 226-230. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key of D major. The melody features a triplet of eighth notes. The bass line has a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

231

Musical notation for measures 231-236. Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key of D major. The melody features a triplet of eighth notes. The bass line has a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

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238 *Innkeeper*

I.K. Run a - way lit - tle mice, or your end won't be nice. She'll cut off your

244

I.K. tails with a great big knife! *Mice exit eeking*

249

I.K. *8va*

Repeat ad lib until mice have gone

253 *Andante* ♩ = 132

p

258 *Innkeeper*

I.K. A star is o - ver Beth - le - hem, and yet it

264

I.K. *seems to me; Its light falls up - on the sta-ble here.*

270

I.K. *And yet, how could that be?*

sotto voce *Innkeeper exits*

276

Chorus enters

Star Carol

281

Slower ♩ = 110

mf

289

Choir *A - bove us in Beth - le - hem shi - ning so bright. A star in the east - ern sky
night - calm and peace - ful o' night a - bove all; O star that is rest - ing a -*

296

Choir

lights up the night. More splen-did than gold is the mess-age it brings Its glo-ry and
bove yon-der stall. Give hope to your peo-ple and light-en our way. Shine down up-on

303

Choir

maj-es-ty her-alds a king. Lamp-light, can-dle-light, light from a-far. Yet
us and turn night in-to day.

310

Choir

none is as love-ly as light from the star.

Chorus exits (after second verse)

317

1. 2. *Mary and Joseph enter*

dialogue over music

Allegretto ♩ = 60

Innkeeper: I'm sorry we have no room, but I see you are tired and must rest. If you would be comfortable in the stable, I can offer you clean straw and a place to stay the night.

324

Piano accompaniment for measures 324-331. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a steady accompaniment with chords and moving lines in both the treble and bass staves.

Innkeeper's wife enters with mother (laden with packages) and shrieks.

332

Piano accompaniment for measures 332-338. The music continues in G major and 4/4 time. The texture remains consistent with the previous section.

339

Con fuoco ♩ = 140

Wife

Vocal and piano accompaniment for measures 339-342. The vocal line is in G minor (two flats) and 4/4 time. The piano accompaniment is more active, with a driving bass line. The lyrics are: "No! Ab-so-lute ly not I say We have no room so".

343

Wife

Vocal and piano accompaniment for measures 343-346. The vocal line continues in G minor and 4/4 time. The piano accompaniment maintains its driving rhythm. The lyrics are: "go a way We have no room so go a way Our inn is full, our".

347

Wife

Vocal and piano accompaniment for measures 347-350. The vocal line concludes in G minor and 4/4 time. The piano accompaniment provides a final accompaniment. The lyrics are: "sta - ble too; So get on out! Now shoo! Shoo! Shoo!".

352 **Allegretto** ♩ = 60

I.K. My dear it's late we can - not send this brand new moth - er

359

I.K. from our door. Our du - ty's clear, we must make room, If on - ly

366 **Con fuoco** ♩ = 140

Wife *accel.* Be - gone I say! This inn is full. It

I.K. on the sta - ble floor.

372 *to Innkeeper* *to Mary and Joseph*

Wife looks as if you can-not pay. I'll deal with you, Just wait and see We have no room now

377 *Mice enter eeking shriek* **Allegro (in 1)**

Wife

go a - way!

Inkeeper's wife and mother-in-law are chased out by eeking mice.

382 *8va*

388 (8) 3

Wife and mother-in-law exit shrieking!

394 (8) (optional repeat)

Finale

401 **Andante** ♩ = 80 *Innkeeper (to Mary and Joseph)*

I.K. It seems we now have

406

I.K. room for all in Beth - le - hem, in Beth - le - hem, A sta - ble and a hum - ble stall in

411 *Chorus enters*

I.K. Beth - le - hem in Ju - de - a

gliss. *8va* *slowing*

Star Carol (Reprise)

416 **Andante** ♩ = 110

Choir A - bove us in Beth - le - hem shi - ning so bright. A star in the

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423

Choir

east-ern sky lights up the night. More splen-did than gold is the mess-age it brings Its

430

Choir

glo - ry and maj - es - ty her - alds a king Lamp - light, can - dle-light,

436

Choir

light from a - far. Yet none is as love - ly as light from the star.

442 *Mice come back in to join the chorus (and why not?)*

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Congregation may join the choir.

448

Choir

O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem how still we see thee
si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is

453

Choir

lie. A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The sil - lent stars go by. Yet
 given. So God im-parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven. No

458

Choir

in thy dark streets shi - neth the ev - er - last - ing light. The hopes and fears of
 ear may hear his co - ming But in this world of sin, where meek souls will re -

463

Choir

all the years are met in thee to - night. How
 ceive him still, the dear Christ en - ters

467

Choir

in.

*If bow music is required,
 use the Eeking Chorus (p. 12)*

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Four WEEKs to EEK! - Teaching and Production Plan

By Carol McClure

Before You Begin

- A. Recruit soloists, mice and mouse-herds.
- B. Recruit set builders, prop collectors, costumers and lighting crew.

Week 1

- A. Have the choir members and parents of “mice” listen to EEK! while following the Choir Score.
- B. Teach the phrases, “to (in) Bethlehem, to (in) Bethlehem” and “to (in) Bethlehem in Judea”.
- C. Teach the stanza phrases of “We’re traveling” in pairs, using flashcards for cues. Example:
We’re traveling from far and near TO...
The journey’s long, the road is clear TO...
- D. Have the choir members sing “We’re traveling” along with the CD.
- E. Teach the choral refrain to the Innkeeper’s solo, “Love and joy...”
- F. Make arrangements for sets and props.
- G. Rehearse with soloists.

Week 2

- A. Have the choir members review *We’re traveling* while working on memorization.
- B. Have the choir members review the refrain, “Love and joy...” while learning the shortened refrain of the second ending. If possible, sing through with the Innkeeper himself.
- C. Have the choir members listen to *Star Carol* while following the Choir Score.
- D. Teach the refrain, “Lamplight, candlelight...” while working on memorization; then, teach the *Star Carol* stanzas, pointing out the reprise of the first stanza and refrain.
- E. Have the choir members sing *Star Carol* and the reprise along with the CD.
- F. Make arrangements for costumes; assign Mary and Joseph (non-singing) roles.

Week 3

- A. Have the choir members review *Star Carol* while working on memorization.
- B. Teach the choir members *O Little Town of Bethlehem* while working on memorization.
- C. Sing through EEK! with either CD or live accompaniment and with soloists.
- D. Introduce staging and walk through EEK! in the performance area.
- E. Check on costumes, props, sets, lighting.
- F. Rehearse “eeking” scenes with mice, mouse-herds and lighting.

Week 4

- A. Have stage set, mice ready and all participants in costume with props.
- B. Review any problem spots for the choir.
- C. Rehearse EEK! as it will be performed.
- D. Go over final instructions for the performance.
- E. Remind yourself that any musical which includes a mob of eeking preschool children dressed as mice is bound to be a rousing success!

EEK! - Production Notes

Costumes

- Innkeeper/Joseph/Villagers - Typical Nativity pageant attire - bathrobes, belted sheets, sandals
- Innkeeper's Wife/Mother-in-Law - See "A Note from the Composer" - possibly modern evening attire; bedecked with jewels, gloves, hat and furs. If you have a MALE clergy person that can be convinced to be the mother-in-law, so much the better!
- Mary - White robe, bright blue shawl (worn draped over head)
- Mice - Gray, black, brown or white sweat shirts and sweat pants, tails (pink yarn) attached; pink elastic headbands, pink ears (double sided pink felt circles with cardboard circle inserts, sewn to the headbands); drawn-on black noses and whiskers; (optional) pink mittens and pink socks

Props and Sets

- Sets and props are *competely* optional in this production, but a few of the props are essential.*
- If EEK! is going to be performed as part of a larger service, it may be a wise idea to keep the sets to a minimum. HOWEVER, if there's room, and you happen to have an inn and a stable handy, all the more fun!
- The Star - Either a self-lighting Moravian star; or, a large cardboard star covered in gold or silver foil, illuminated by a spotlight, suspended over the stable
- Stuffed Animals - carried or pulled (attached securely to skateboards) by villagers
- Hobby Horses - ridden by Mary and a few of the villagers
- Shepherd Staffs - carried by a few of the villagers
- Lanterns - carried by Joseph and a few of the villagers
- Packages (*essential!) - garrishly wrapped, carried by Innkeeper's Wife and Mother-in-Law
- Broom - carried by Innkeeper, as needed
- The Inn - Outline of the roof, possibly with suspended sign, "The Inn at Bethlehem - Donkey Parking in Rear", and optional inn "check-in" table, equipped with scroll, stylus and money box
- The Stable - Outline of the roof, a few bales of hay

Staging

- Keep it simple, relaxed and fun.
- The staging area should have room for the inn in the forefront, with the stable slightly farther back.
- The star can be suspended over the stable, but should not be lit until mice have gone (p. 13).
- At the opening of EEK! the choir may enter singing *We're traveling*; or, they may move quickly into place before they begin to sing. If the second option is chosen, costumed, non-singing adults may enter as *We're traveling* is being sung. They may then act as mute "extras" throughout the production.
- The Innkeeper can sweep or mime checking guests in as he sings. He should appear quite beleaguered when in the presence of his wife.
- The mice may be anywhere in the church before they appear all together for the *Eeking Chorus*. The random "eeks" from the little mice add to the charm of the production. A few older mice should be placed strategically so that they may appear as needed (p. 9). The effect during the *Eeking Chorus* (p. 14) and the chase scene (p. 21) should be that of absolute bedlam. The mice should be running everywhere during the Eeking Chorus, and the mice should chase the Innkeeper's Wife and the Mother-in-Law all over and out of the church. The "eeks" should be constant during these scenes. (Hint: It might be a good idea to elect a couple of "mouse-herders" to round up the stragglers.)
- During the singing of *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, the mice may join the choir, or they may gather by the stable to catch a glimpse of Mary and Joseph's new baby. The congregation should be invited to sing along with the cast.