

'STUFF AND NONSENSE AT CHRISTMAS'

7 EPISODES FOR RADIO

Inspired by the Nonsense of Edward Lear

Music and Book by John Mills

Adapted for Radio from the original
'Stuff And Nonsense - The Musical'
by John Mills

1) What is 'Stuff And Nonsense At Christmas' All About?

A celebration of the nonsense writings of Edward Lear combined with the excitement and joys of Christmas. A festive feast of musical entertainment for all the family.

Meet Edward Lear - a writer, poet, illustrator, musician and traveller. Author of favourite limericks, alphabets, stories and nonsense-poems for young people.

Meet the Jumblies - dancing, tumbling characters from Lear's furtive imagination. Cheerful, smiley, usually-happy, they ferment in Lear's head, ready for '*another nonsensing*' so they can burst into life. A world of fun and sadness, reality and madness, love and loss.

Set in the week leading up to Christmas Day, '*Stuff And Nonsense At Christmas*' explores Lear's troublesome events with his tumbly Jumblies who sing their own stories which serve to illustrate key moments. There are songs of love, joy and of loss, woven through Lear's own narrative.

In Lear's 'squirly-whirly' world we meet his housekeeper - Old Foss (a talking cat), and his physician, Dr Calico who is Hootie Owl in disguise - the plot thickens. Not forgetting Mr C (aka Santa) who is watching events and making guest appearances in each episode. In Lear's imagination we have the Dong with a luminous nose and the fickle Jewelly Jumbly, King and Queen Pelican with their shy

daughter Dell and her beau - King Crane who, sssh!, has no webs between his toes. Come and meet the Scroobious Pip, Jolly Pobble (who has no toes!) and 'hard-of-hearing' Aunt Jobiska, the Yonghy Bonghy Bo and Lady Jingly, Hootie Owl and the 'groovy' Quangle Wangle Quee. All of whom perform with a Jumbly Chorus whose '*heads are green and hands are blue*' and a multitude of birds and beasts.

'*Stuff And Nonsense The Musical*' is an entertaining listening-experience for the whole family, with its multitude of engaging characters, tuneful songs and a triumphant and happy ending.

2) Author's Note

In enabling Lear's writing to be brought to the stage I made many decisions with both text and characters. His characters are now brought to life under the collective term of 'Jumblies'. Many verses of the poems have been combined or removed where they didn't move the narrative forward quickly enough. New limericks have been written for many of the characters to allow further development. I have frequently changed Lear's words from third to first person. I have also updated behaviours that were acceptable to previous generations but less so to modern audiences. In short, I have taken liberties with Lear's original writing, but I hope that in so doing I have breathed new life into these wonderful characters.

3) Lear's poems that have been set to music are:

The Jumblies

Calico Pie

The Akond Of Swat

The Dong With A Luminous Nose

Stuff And Nonsense Alphabet

The Pelican Chorus

The Scroobious Pip (an unfinished poem)

The Pobble Who Has No Toes

The Courtship Of The Yonghy Bonghy Bo

The Owl And The Pussycat

The Quangle Wangle's Hat

How Pleasant To Know Mr Lear

4) Note To The Director

Please have fun with these episodes, which should be upbeat and pacey, and find opportunities to add nonsense enhancements at every opportunity. Echoes of *'The Goon Show'* meets *'The Navy Lark'*.

5) Characters

'Stuff And Nonsense At Christmas' has 22 named characters but there are plentiful opportunities for doubling up as required, including within each episode. It is possible to perform these radio plays using only five performers as shown below. The roles of Dr Calico and Hootie Owl should be taken by the same actor. The majority of roles can easily become non-gender specific with minor script changes.

#01 MR LEAR	Nonsense Poet, low-pitched sneezes
#02 OLD FOSS	'Put-upon' talking cat
#03 HOOTIE OWL	Pompous 'hootie'
#04 THE DONG	Forlorn
#05 JULIE JUMBLY	Fickle, flighty
#06 PELICAN DELL	Shy pelican
#07 DR CALICO	Imposter, Hootie Owl alter-ego. High-pitched sneezes
#08 KING CRANE	Haughty
#09 QUEEN PELICAN	Long-suffering wife of King
#10 KING PELICAN	Boisterous, guffawing, yokelly
#11 SCROOBIOUS PIP	'Pip! Pip! Pip!' Don't pigeonhole me.
#12 JOLLY POBBLE	Jolly, bouncy
#13 AUNT JOBISKA	Older, hard of hearing
#14 YONGHY BONGHY	'Spurned lover'
#15 LADY JINGLY	Rather posh, emotional
#16 QUANGLE WANGLE	Hippie-ish, 'love-bucket'
#17 MR C.	aka Santa
#18 BLUEZY PARROT	Imprisoned 'blues' singer.
#19 GREENZY PARROT	Another imprisoned 'blues' singer.
#20 SLY FOX	Wily, conniving, untrustworthy character
#21 TURKEY	Fearful of Christmas. Double-trouble!
#22 PIGGYWIG	Also fearful of Christmas. Oink, oink!

All performers are also JUMBLIES/WW

One SFX-TRACK engineer is also required. Maximum two tracks.
One LIVE-SFX artist is also required.

6) A Cast Of 5 can be used if the following roles are combined:

PERFORMER 1: CHARACTER #01

PERFORMER 2: CHARACTER #02/#06/#11

PERFORMER 3: CHARACTER #03/#07/#10/#17

PERFORMER 4: CHARACTER #04/#08/#12/#14/#18/#20/#22

PERFORMER 5: CHARACTER #05/#09/#13/#15/#16/#19/#21

	Episode Characters						
	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7
#01 MR LEAR	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
#02 OLD FOSS	*	*	*	*		*	*
#03 HOOTIE OWL	*		*		*	*	*
#04 THE DONG			*				
#05 JEWELLY JUMBLY			*				
#06 PELICAN DELL				*			
#07 DR CALICO		*	*	*	*		*
#08 KING CRANE				*			
#09 QUEEN PELICAN				*			
#10 KING PELICAN				*			
#11 SCROOBIOUS PIP					*		
#12 JOLLY POBBLE					*		*
#13 AUNT JOBISKA					*		*
#14 YONGHY BONGHY BO							
#15 LADY JINGLY							*
#16 QUANGLE WANGLE QUEE							*
#17 MR C.	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
#18 BLUEZY PARROT		*					
#19 GREENZY PARROT		*					
#20 SLY FOX			*				
#21 TURKEY						*	
#22 PIGGYWIG						*	

7) Episodes And Synopsis

There are 7 Episodes:

- Episode 1: Interrupted Serenades
- Episode 2: A Doctor in The House
- Episode 3: Sweet Dreams
- Episode 4: Jumblies Disease!
- Episode 5: Not So Happy Families
- Episode 6: A Glimmer Of Hope
- Episode 7: It's Just Stuff And Nonsense!

Episode 1 **Interrupted Serenade!**

Synopsis: It's very nearly Christmas. It's been raining. There's a cold, gusty wind. The busking Hootie Owl serenades Old Foss, housekeeper cat to Mr Lear. Mr Lear returns from his exhilarating holiday and we meet the tumbly Jumblies from inside Mr Lear's mind. The happy mood disappears due to boiler trouble and thawing pipes. Mr Lear develops annoying sneezes.

Scene 1	Mr C's Grotto
Scene 2	Outside Mr Lear's House
Scene 3	Mr Lear's Hallway
Scene 4	Mr Lear's Study
	<i>Song: #04 Just Stuff And Nonsense To Me (2'07")</i>
Scene 5	Mr Lear's Study
	<i>Song: #05 The Jumblies (5'08")</i>
Scene 6	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 7	Mr C's Grotto

Episode 2 **A Doctor in The House**

Synopsis: Dr Calico calls and prescribes 'bluez' tablets for Mr Lear's sneezes. Dr Calico is enamoured with Old Foss. Dr Calico calls again, with more flowers for Old Foss. We enter the 'Land Of Calico' and hear from some parrots how they were trapped by the evil Dr Calico. After freeing Bluezy and greenzy, the parrots, Mr Lear returns to his study and we learn how Mr Lear's 'nonsensings' are exhausting for him. Old Foss describes Mr Lear's difficulty with relationships. Mr Lear reflects on his own identity and mood swings.

Scene 1	Mr C's Grotto
Scene 2	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 3	The Land Of Calico
	<i>Song: #08 Calico Pie (2'15")</i>
Scene 4	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 5	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 6	The Land Of Swat
	<i>Song: #11 The Akond Of Swat (3'28")</i>
Scene 7	Mr C's Grotto

Episode 3 **Sweet Dreams!**

Synopsis: Mr Lear is still sneezing and Old Foss becomes increasingly irritated with him. Mr Lear meets the Dong who has 'loved and lost' but keeps searching for love. Just like Mr Lear, perhaps? The Jumblies and Mr Lear have 'fun with food' until they are interrupted by an angry Dr Calico who prescribes peace and quiet and 'greenz and bluez' tablets.

Scene 1	Mr C's Grotto
Scene 2	Mr Lear's Bedroom
Scene 3	The Land Of Dong
	<i>Song: #13 The Dong With A Luminous Nose (7'20")</i>

Scene 4	The Land Of Dong
Scene 5	Several Bedrooms
Scene 6	Mr Lear's Kitchen
Scene 7	Mr Lear's Kitchen
	<i>Song: #15 Vanish And Leave Us For Good!</i>
Scene 8	Mr C's Grotto

Episode 4 Jumblies Disease!

Synopsis: Mr C teaches the Jumblies a thought-provoking carol. Dr Calico declares Mr Lear to have the dreaded Jumblies Disease! Lear's condition deteriorates into hallucinating and colourful alphabets. Old Foss becomes very angry with the way she is being treated and eventually leaves Mr Lear! Mr Lear is left all alone. What's to become of him?

Scene 1	Mr C's Grotto
Scene 2	Mr Lear's Study
	<i>Song: #16 Ribbons Of Love (2'30")</i>
Scene 3	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 4	Mr Lear's Study
	<i>Song: #19 Stuff And Nonsense Alphabet (4'30")</i>
Scene 5	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 6	The Land of Pelicans
	<i>Song: #21 The Pelican Chorus (4'13")</i>
	<i>Song: #22 Farewell To Dell (0'53")</i>
Scene 7	Mr C's Grotto

Episode 5 Not So Happy Families!

Synopsis: Mr Lear is alone and in reflective mood. He has a nonsensical dream where he meets the lugubrious Scroobious Pip who questions the need for everyone to be pigeonholed. Dr Calico returns and is horrified to find that Old Foss is no longer at Mr Lear's. Dr Calico is determined to find her. Jolly Pobble and Aunt Jobiska visit to cheer Mr Lear but with limited success. Aunt Jobiska's poor hearing often leads to confusion and misunderstanding. Dr Calico informs them of the seriousness of Mr Lear's illness - Jumblies Disease!

Scene 1	Mr C's Grotto
Scene 2 & 3	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 4	The Land Of Scroobious
	<i>Song: #24 The Scroobious Pip (4'07")</i>
Scene 5	Mr Lear's Hallway
Scene 6	Mr Lear's Study
	<i>Song: #26 The Pobble Who Has No Toes (3'51")</i>
Scene 7	Mr Lear's Hallway
Scene 8	Mr Lear's Parlour
Scene 9	Mr C's Grotto

Episode 6 A Glimmer Of Hope

Synopsis: Mr Lear has slept well for the first time in ages. And he has stopped sneezing. Hooray! We meet the Yonghy Bonghy Bo who proposed marriage to Lady Jingly. As she has spurned him, he seeks a happy life with the Turtle from Gurtle. Mr Lear writes a letter of love to Old Foss. He is interrupted by Old Foss who has returned, but only to declare she has met Hootie Owl and they are to be married! Mr Lear is dumbfounded when they ask if he can host their wedding party at his home, on Christmas Day. What will he do?

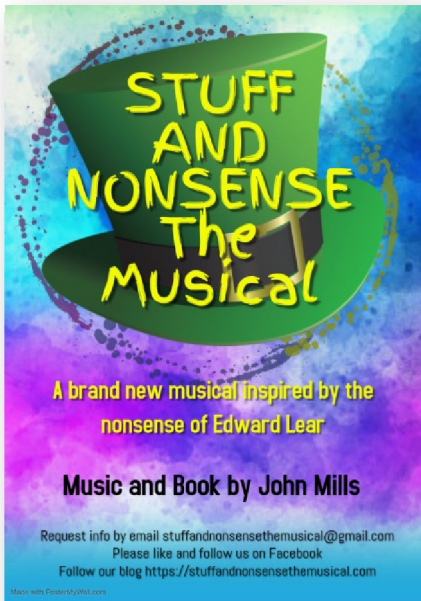
Scene 1	Mr C's Stables
Scene 2	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 3	The Land Of Yonghy <i>Song: #27 The Courtship Of The Yonghy Bonghy Bo (5'38")</i>
Scene 4 & 5	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 6	At Sea In A Pea Green Boat <i>Song: #30 The Owl And The Pussycat (4'28")</i>
Scene 7	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 8	Mr C's Grotto

Episode 7 It's Just Stuff And Nonsense!

Synopsis: Mr C. (aka Santa) wakes Quangle Wangle, an expert party-planner who helps create the Christmas party. Half-way through it is revealed that Hootie Owl and Dr Calico are one and the same, and that enticing Old Foss was all part of Dr Calico's elaborate plan. An angry exchange between Mr Lear and Dr Calico is calmed by the Quangle Wangle. Mr Lear happily opens his Christmas cards, gives his reindeer scarf to Jolly Pobble, then sings his own song as a Finale.

Scene 1	Mr C's Bathroom
Scene 2	Mr Lear's Bedroom
Scene 3	Quangle Wangle's Bedroom
Scene 4	Mr Lear's Hallway
Scene 5	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 6	The Land Of Quee <i>Song: #32 The Quangle Wangle's Hat (3'15")</i>
Scene 7	Mr Lear's Parlour
Scene 8	Mr Lear's Hallway
Scene 9	Mr Lear's Parlour <i>Song: #35 How Pleasant To Know Mr Lear (2'47")</i> <i>Song: #36 It's Just Stuff And Nonsense At Christmas</i>
Scene 10	Mr Lear's Study
Scene 11	Mr C's Grotto

8) **Music**



A compilation of songs from '*Stuff And Nonsense The Musical*' can be heard on our website

<https://stuffandnonsensethemusical.com>

MP3 backing tracks are available for all music. A vocal score, piano-conductor score and instrumental scores are available.

For more information including performing rights please email:

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