



imaginary theatre company

2012–2013 SEASON

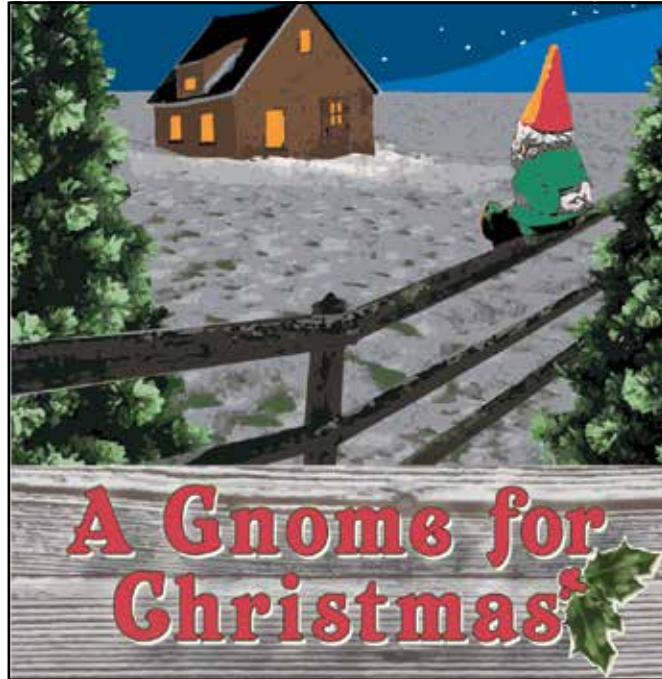
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by Sarah Brandt

Music and Lyrics by Stephen James Neale

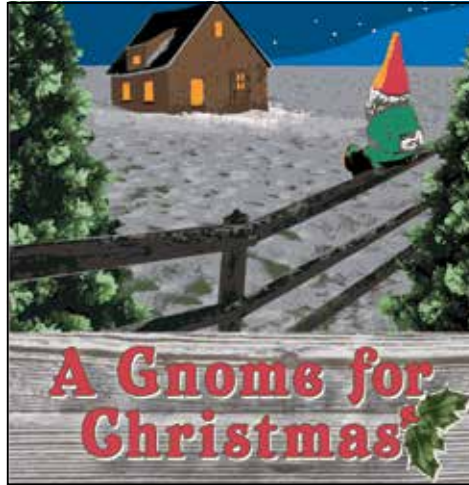
Directed by Doug Finlayson

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Imaginary theatre company



by Sarah Brandt

Music and Lyrics by Stephen James Neale

Directed by Doug Finlayson

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The Company

Monique Hafen*	LULU BENNETT
Alan Knoll*	LEONARD BENNETT
Jerome Lowe*	TIMMY
Laurie McConnell*	AGATHA TODE, FRANK

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.



Financial assistance for this theatre has been provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency; the Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis; and the St. Louis Regional Arts Commission.



setting the scene



Timmy is a compassionate gnome who lives in a forest near a rundown farmhouse owned and rented out by the crotchety Ms. Agatha Tode. Timmy has his skunk friend Frank to keep him company, but his job as a magical gnome is to take care of the farmhouse and those who reside there, so when it's empty, he feels lonely and without purpose. However, that's only until Leonard, a wacky inventor, and his levelheaded daughter, Lulu, move in. Because Leonard's inventions rarely work out, they struggle for money, so they make a deal with Agatha that they can live in the house for the first month at no charge so long as they fix up the place.

However, Leonard proves easily distracted and tends to make things worse with his messy inventions-gone-wrong. Lulu, though very smart, doesn't have a knack for home repair. Agatha threatens to kick them out if she doesn't start seeing progress, which especially distresses Lulu because she longs for a permanent home in time for Christmas. Their situation appears hopeless until Timmy decides to help out. When Leonard and Lulu aren't around, he starts fixing things through magic. Lulu is absolutely befuddled when things appear to fix and clean themselves, but the imaginative Leonard is convinced it's magic! However, Timmy is shy and afraid to reveal himself because people tend to run from gnomes.

How will Timmy find the courage to trust Leonard and Lulu? Will Agatha kick Leonard and Lulu out if they don't get the place fixed up in time? Will Lulu ever get the home she wants or will Timmy ever find the friends he needs? How can they all work together?



who's who?



Timmy: A friendly, good-hearted gnome who lives in the forest. It is his responsibility to care for the farm and the people who live there with his unique gnome magic. When the house is empty, Timmy has no job to do and feels lonely and somewhat useless.

Agatha Tode: The cranky landlady who owns the farmhouse and rents it out. She had a run-in with Timmy once in the past and is now afraid of him and anything she deems out of the ordinary.

Leonard Bennett: A quirky inventor who loves creativity and possibilities. Unfortunately, his inventions rarely succeed.

Lulu Bennett: Leonard's 10-year-old daughter who loves her father but is very unlike him in that she's sensible and practical. She longs for a permanent home and does not enjoy having to move every time her dad's inventions fail. She has trouble believing in magic, and would rather refer to the facts in her many books.

Frank: Timmy's best friend and wise-cracking sidekick who is afraid of humans because he thinks they unfairly judge him for being a skunk even though he's never sprayed anyone. Frank speaks in skunk noises when around humans, but Timmy can understand him.



what's the story?



The scene opens on a beautiful forest where a rundown farmhouse resides. Right away we meet Timmy, a gnome who lives in the forest, and his friend Frank, who is a skunk. They're approaching the farmhouse, when Leonard, an oddball inventor, and his 10-year-old daughter, Lulu, walk up. They're moving in, and Leonard can't stop talking about the exciting new adventure they're going to have in the fixer-upper. However, we find out that they've had to move quite a bit because Leonard's inventions are rarely successful, and they struggle. Lulu is the more sensible and intellectual of the two, and prefers stability to creativity but follows her father around dutifully.

Agatha, the landlady, enters and tells them that they better start working on improvements soon considering she's giving them one month rent-free in exchange for them fixing the place up.

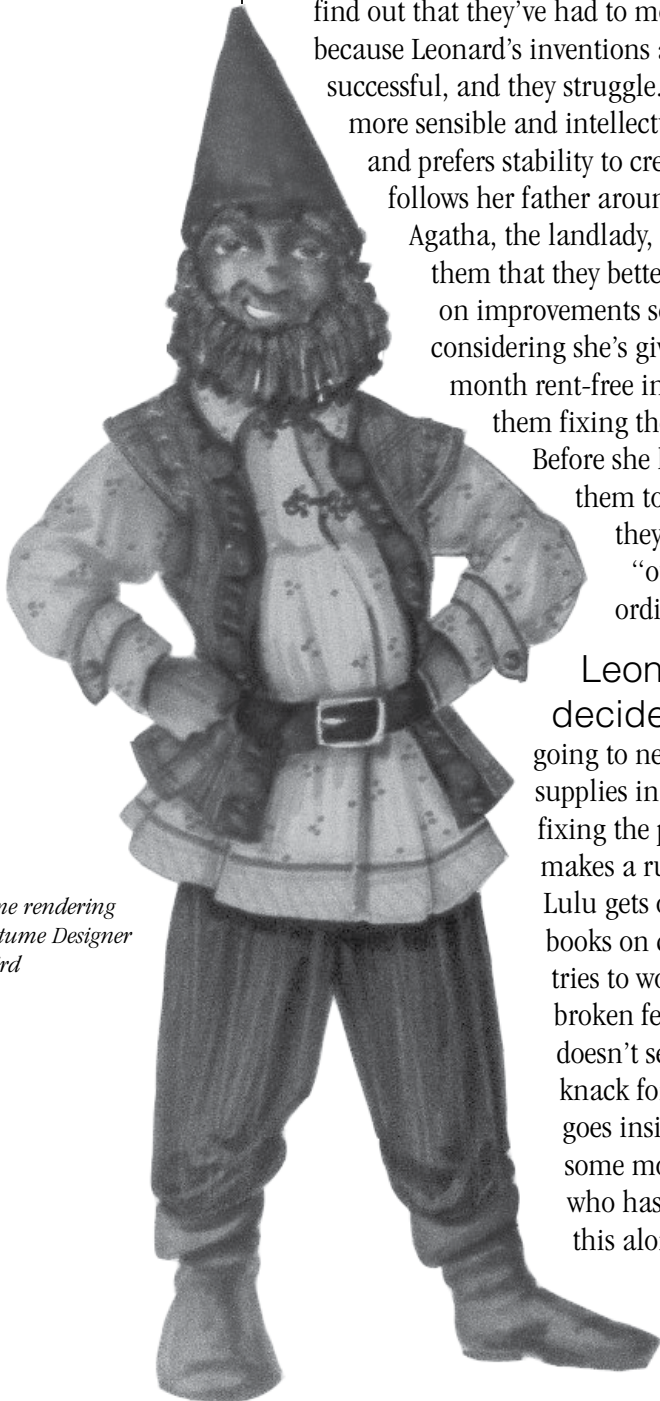
Before she leaves, she tells them to let her know if they see anything "out of the ordinary."

Leonard decides that he's going to need some supplies in order to start fixing the place up, so he makes a run into town. Lulu gets one of her books on carpentry and tries to work on the broken fence, but she doesn't seem to have a knack for it. Instead she goes inside to unpack some more. Timmy, who has witnessed all this along with Frank,

decides to lend a helping hand and fixes the fence using magic.

Leonard comes home and compliments Lulu on her excellent job of fixing the fence, but she tells him it wasn't her. Leonard gets really excited and insists it must have been a magical gnome. "Their job is to help people," he tells Lulu. "Each one has his own home or family to watch over." Lulu tells him that that's just a fairy tale—it's not real. Unable to agree, they give up on the point and return inside the house. Timmy and Frank emerge again, and Frank asks Timmy why he would help someone who doesn't even believe he exists. Timmy tells him that it's in the gnome's handbook, which requires them to do good deeds; Timmy's job is to protect the forest and farm.

The next morning, we hear an explosion. Unfortunately, Leonard decided to try his Spaghetti Smasher as a Berry Bopper, but it backfired and there's blueberry juice everywhere. Agatha becomes very angry and says if it doesn't get cleaned up, they have to hire a professional cleaning crew. Lulu and Leonard then exit unsure of how they will ever get blueberry juice out of the curtains and rug. Timmy and Frank enter, and Timmy works his magic again without Leonard and Lulu seeing anything. Leonard is thrilled at another example of what can only be a gnome's work, but Lulu is still skeptical and decides to set a trap. Frank gets scared and lets out a little of his awful skunky smell. Lulu discovers them but still can't believe that Timmy is a gnome. However, Leonard is ecstatic at finally having proof and tells Lulu that although some wonderful things are hard to believe, that doesn't mean they're not real. He tells Timmy he's glad he's there because they need all the help they can get. Timmy is super happy because he usually gets chased away rather than being asked to



*Costume rendering
by Costume Designer
Lou Bird*

stay. He tells them he'll help get the house in tip-top shape!

The next day, Agatha returns to check on their progress, and she's shocked to see the mess cleaned up. While she's there, her back acts up and goes into terrible contortions, a result of being old and having to regularly chop wood to sell for extra money. To help, Leonard straps on his invention, the Posture Propeller, and it surprisingly works! Crotchety Agatha is happy but unwillingly to show it and tells them she'll check back later tonight.

Later on, Lulu admits to her father that she's desperate to fix up the house so that they can have a real home in time for Christmas. Timmy overhears this and tells

her that she's lucky to have a father who loves her very much and that home is wherever family is. Realizing Timmy's point, Lulu cheers up, and together she, Timmy and Leonard work to fix up the house in one day. Agatha can't believe it and is frightened when she sees Timmy; she says he's a troll who scares people, but Lulu insists he's their friend. Timmy is incredibly touched and helps Leonard put the finishing touches on his invention called the Wood Worker. It chops wood so Agatha doesn't have to do it for extra money anymore. With everyone helping each other out, they all, including Frank, become friends—just in time for Christmas.



words to the wise



Fixer-upper: a rundown house offered at a bargain price

Adios: Spanish for “good-bye”

Workshop: a place where work is done

Posture: the way which somebody carries his or her body, especially when standing

Tweak: a slight adjustment or change to something in order to fix or improve it

Calibration: the checking of an instrument against a standard to see if there is any difference, which usually means an error

Landlady: a woman who owns a property and rents it to tenants

Carpentry: the work of building and repairing things made of wood

Productive: able to create successful results from one's work

Sturdy: strong and solidly made

Oath: a formal pledge or promise

Mishap: an accident

Miscalculation: a mistake based on computing wrong numbers

Shenanigans: mischievous high jinks

Lookout: someone who watches carefully for any signs of interruption to a secret task

Immaculate: absolutely clean, spotless

Hola: Spanish for “hello”

Contraption: a strange device or machine

Troll: a supernatural elf-like creature

Please feel free to adapt these materials to suit your classroom needs and reproduce them for future use.

All About Skunks

Poor Frank gets a bad rap for being a skunk. He complains that even though he's never sprayed anyone, he still gets treated as a "walking stink bomb." If you've never been partial to skunks, don't worry! You're definitely not the only one. But maybe you'll feel a little differently once you know a little bit more about them. Here are some fun facts!

by the way—

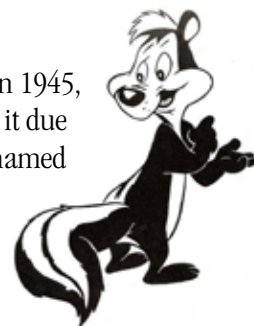
Skunks like Frank are only native to the Americas, but colonies have reportedly been discovered in the United Kingdom and Holland. Maybe Frank and his friends are making their homes in more places than we know!

- They're only protecting themselves! A skunk uses its foul-smelling spray as a defense mechanism against predators—wouldn't that smell ruin your appetite? So next time you smell that stinky skunk scent, think about how it was only the skunk trying to defend itself!
- Their reputation precedes them: You're not the only one who might recoil from the sight of a skunk. Other animals know to avoid them as well for fear of their stinky weapon, so skunks are usually only attacked if there's little other food around. They're fairly easy to spot; most are cat-sized, and though their colors can come in a variety of striped, spotted or swirled patterns, they're usually all that signature black-and-white color scheme.
- They're an all-American mammal and prefer cozy spots: Members of the weasel family, nearly all skunks live in the Americas and inhabit clearings, pastures and open lands bordering forests. They climb trees and are known to nest in burrows created by other animals, hollow logs or limbs of trees they climb and even abandoned buildings.
- They're not picky eaters: Being omnivores who usually hunt for food at night, skunks feast on fruits, plants, insects, larvae, worms, eggs, reptiles, fish and some small mammals when food is scarce
- Farmers, gardeners and landowners should thank them: Skunks are very useful in that they feed on agricultural and garden pests, such as mice, rats, moles and insects such as white grubs and cutworms that can damage lawns crops or hay.

Also their famous cousins are quite charming!

Pepé Le Pew

Originally called Stinky when he was introduced as a Warner Brothers character in 1945, Pepé is a French skunk who's always looking for love but has a hard time finding it due to his stinky nature. He still pursues many targets though, including a black cat named Penelope who often gets a white stripe on her back by accident, which leads Pepé to think she's his skunky soulmate.



Flower

A skunk from Walt Disney's classic film Bambi, Flower meets Thumper and Bambi when they are exploring a flower patch. Unaware of what a skunk is, Bambi calls him Flower, which Thumper finds hilarious. Liking the name, the shy, sweet and lovable Flower doesn't correct Bambi and instantly becomes their friend.



Garden Gnomes

Unless you have some magical connections, the closest you've likely come to seeing a gnome like Timmy is in someone's yard. Garden gnomes are a popular lawn ornament that can add quirky curb appeal to any landscape. But where, how and why did the fun idea start? Here's a little bit more information on garden gnomes!

Meaning: In folklore, gnomes were thought to bring luck and help to humans in the garden and house—especially at night when humans were sleeping. Much like Timmy helped Leonard and Lulu when they weren't looking!

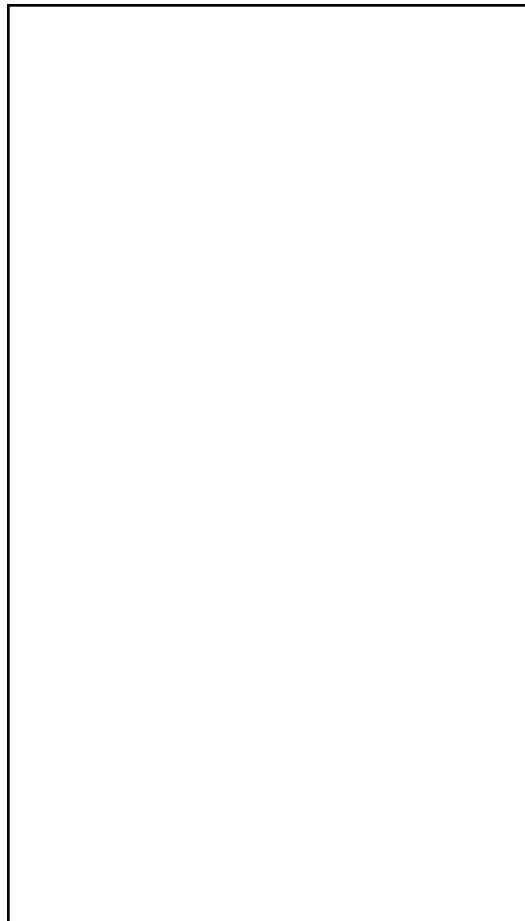
History: In the 1800s, German potters began producing the first clay garden gnomes, and the practice soon spread to other European countries. It became a tradition for garden gnomes to be passed down from generation to generation as family heirlooms. Pottery garden gnomes experienced a surge in popularity in the 1930s and 1940s. By the 1960s, mass production of garden gnomes turned to mostly plastic models rather than handcrafted clay gnomes.

Recent popularity: Garden gnomes have extended to symbolize not only home but the value in leaving home as well. They've made significant appearances in modern pop culture; in 1997, the Garden Gnome Liberation Front was introduced in France promoting the tongue-in-cheek cause of liberating garden gnomes by stealing them from yards. In the 2001 film *Amélie*, a flight attendant takes a gnome around the world and takes pictures of it in front of landmarks to encourage the gnome's owner, to travel. Travelocity also uses a similar "traveling gnome" concept to advertise its services.



Draw Your Own Gnome!

Garden gnomes are usually seen wearing colorful pointy hats, old-fashioned tunics and holding garden instruments such as wheelbarrows and shovels. If you could create a gnome, would it look like this? Or would your gnome look totally different? Maybe you don't need help in the garden, but a gnome would come in handy in helping you do other chores, such as cleaning your room or washing the dishes. Create your own gnome and base its looks on what you need help with!



Famous Inventors

Leonard successfully invented both the Posture Propeller and Wood Worker in this play. If he is able to patent them (meaning to get approved rights from the government to be the only one to sell them to the public), he would join a prestigious group of famous inventors whose creations were so important, it's hard to believe people ever lived without them! Use the clues below to match the inventor to the invention!

ANSWERS

A. Motion-picture camera

_____ 1. In 1794, Eli Whitney invented a gin that made the “fabric of our lives” much easier to make, which is nice considering how much we love “the touch, the feel of _____.”

B. Slinky

_____ 2. When staples and glue won't work, you'll be glad Richard Drew invented this sticky solution in 1930.

C. Scotch Tape

_____ 3. If it wasn't for Alexander Graham Bell's invention in 1876, the only hope we'd have for talking to folks far away is two metal cans and an extra long piece of string!

D. Bifocals

_____ 4. It's a bird! It's this 1903 machine invented by brothers Orville and Wilbur Wright that allowed people to fly! No, it's Superman!

E. Model T automobile

_____ 5. In 1930, Ruth Wakefield, owner of the Toll House Inn, ran out of baker's chocolate to make cookies, so she decided to break apart a Nestle Semi-Sweet Chocolate Bar, which didn't melt completely like she expected but resulted in a now classic, yummy baked good.

F. Printing press

_____ 6. Next time you email somebody or find the answer to a question just by Googling it, you can thank Tim Berners-Lee for his 1991 invention that allows us to go “online.”

G. Telephone

_____ 7. In 1873, Levi Strauss decided to use denim to make durable pants for workers, but now they're a part of most people's go-to casual outfit.

H. Cotton

_____ 8. Elias Howe's invention in 1846 put out 250 stitches a minute, a relief to exhausted fingers everywhere who spent hours stitching clothes by hand.

I. Windshield wipers

_____ 9. In 1784, Benjamin Franklin invented these eyeglasses that used special lenses so that the wearer could see things better up close and from a distance.

J. Blue jeans

_____ 10. Love movies? Then you probably love Thomas Edison for his invention that captured an employee pretending to sneeze in 1888.

K. iPod, iPhone, iPad

_____ 11. In 1905, Mary Anderson patented this rubber blade that makes it a lot easier to drive in the rain.

L. Airplane

_____ 12. We wouldn't even need Mary Anderson's invention if Henry Ford's Ford Motor Company hadn't introduced this first motor vehicle to be produced in large amounts.

M. Chocolate chip cookies

_____ 13. In 1945, Richard James saw a spring bouncing on the floor and thought it would make a fun toy, so he came up with this playful invention.

O. Sewing machine

_____ 14. Next time you read a book, you can thank Johannes Gutenberg and his 1436 mass production invention for not having to make out someone's sloppy handwriting.

P. World Wide Web

_____ 15. Steve Jobs co-founded Apple Computers in 1976, leading the way for these three wildly popular gadgets of today that have revolutionized modern technology.

You're the Inventor

Leonard Bennett is a little nutty—but don't you think he has to be in order to dream something up as crazy as the Posture Propeller? Most inventors are those who think outside the box and let their imagination run away with them. Have you ever thought of something so creative and original that it was practically a new invention? If not, maybe now's the time to put on your thinking cap and to give your own imagination some exercise! Think about something you'd like to invent. Answer the questions below to help you shape your idea!

1. Usually inventions are created to help someone, i.e. Agatha's bad back is helped by the Posture Propeller. What's a problem of yours or someone you know that you think could be fixed by an invention?

2. How would the invention work in solving the problem?

3. What type of materials would be needed to build your invention? Plastic, wood, cotton, glass, paint, glitter, fire, water, lights, flowers? Feel free to get really creative!

4. What would you name your invention?

5. Draw a picture below of what your invention would look like!

Life Lessons

This is a heartwarming tale because it seems every character learns a valuable lesson. Fill out the spaces below for each character to describe a problem they have, the lesson they learn, who teaches it to them and how it changes them by the end of the play. The first character is filled out for you!

Leonard

PROBLEM: He's very creative and free-spirited but has a hard time focusing.

LESSON LEARNED: Creativity is very valuable but so is responsibility.

WHO TEACHES IT TO HIM (it can be more than one person!): Lulu

HOW IT CHANGES HIM: He's able to focus and create the very useful Wood Worker, which saves Agatha a lot of time. In return, she allows Leonard and Lulu to stay in the house so that they can finally have a home.

Lulu

PROBLEM: _____

LESSON LEARNED: _____

WHO TEACHES IT TO HER: _____

HOW IT CHANGES HER: _____

Timmy

PROBLEM: _____

LESSON LEARNED: _____

WHO TEACHES IT TO HIM: _____

HOW IT CHANGES HIM: _____

Ms. Agatha Tode

PROBLEM: _____

LESSON LEARNED: _____

WHO TEACHES IT TO HER: _____

HOW IT CHANGES HER: _____

Boppin' Berries

Leonard and Timmy are trying different combinations of fruits in the Berry Bopper. Add up the fruits in the following problems to see how many they used.

LEONARD

2 strawberries
+ 5 blueberries

8 raspberries
+ 1 boysenberry

3 blueberries
+ 2 gooseberries

4 blackberries
+ 5 cranberries

3 strawberries
+ 6 raspberries



TIMMY

1 blackberry
+ 3 boysenberries

4 blueberries
+ 2 cranberries

2 strawberries
+ 1 raspberry

8 gooseberries
+ 3 boysenberries

5 cranberries
+ 7 blackberries

BONUS:

Add all the numbers together for each inventor to find out who used the most berries!

A-maze-ing

Help Frank find his way back to the house for Christmas dinner.

