

Michaelmas Mouse

Primary Script
by
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CAST LIST

N.B. In the following list, the bracketed number shows the number of spoken lines each role has.

An asterisk (*) before the character's name indicates that this character ALSO has solo or featured sung lines.

<i>Narrators</i>		<i>City Mice</i>		<i>Nativity Characters</i>	
Narrator 1	(30)	Aunty Chrissy	(8)	Mary	(5)
Narrator 2	(23)	Uncle Cedric	(5)	Joseph	(6)
		Sarah	(7)	Donkey	(0)
<i>Principal Characters</i>		Cynthia	(2)		
Michaelmas	(36)	Susie	(9)	<i>King Herod's Palace</i>	
* Morz	(19)	Sally	(4)	King Herod	(9)
		Cindy	(5)	Minister 1	(3)
<i>Country Mice</i>		Celia	(2)	Minister 2	(2)
Dad	(3)	Sylvia	(1)	Messenger 1	(5)
Mum	(4)			Messenger 2	(7)
Mungo	(2)	<i>Shepherds</i>		Maid 1	(2)
Morris	(4)	Sam	(3)	Maid 2	(2)
Mark	(1)	Solly	(3)	Cook	(4)
Minnie	(2)	Stephen	(3)	Soldier 1	(1)
Maureen	(3)				
Madge	(4)	<i>Sheep</i>			
Melanie	(2)	Sheep 1	(7)		
Midge	(2)	Sheep 2	(4)		
Marjorie	(2)	Sheep 3	(3)		
		Sheep 4	(3)		
<i>Travellers</i>					
James	(2)	<i>Kings</i>			
Jesse	(2)	* King 1	(6)		
John	(2)	* King 2	(7)		
		* King 3	(5)		

N.B. In addition to the characters listed above, a Chorus of Soldiers, Onlookers and Merchants will be required.

Scene 3: The Marketplace is an improvisation scene. Examples of Merchant calls can be found on page 18 of the script.

SPEAKING ROLES BY NUMBER OF LINES

N.B. In the following list, the number shows how many spoken lines each role has. An asterisk (*) before the character's name indicates that this character ALSO has solo or featured sung lines.

Michaelmas Mouse.....	36
Narrator 1	30
Narrator 2	23
* Morz	19
King Herod.....	9
Susie.....	9
Aunty Chrissy	8
* King 2	7
Messenger 2.....	7
Sarah	7
Sheep 1	7
Joseph.....	6
* King 1	6
Cindy	5
* King 3	5
Mary.....	5
Messenger 1	5
Uncle Cedric.....	5
Cook	4
Madge.....	4
Morris.....	4
Mum.....	4
Sally.....	4
Sheep 2	4
Dad	3
Maureen	3
Minister 1	3
Sam	3
Sheep 3	3
Sheep 4	3
Solly.....	3
Stephen	3
Celia	2

Cynthia	2
James	2
Jesse	2
John	2
Maid 1	2
Maid 2	2
Marjorie.....	2
Melanie	2
Midge.....	2
Minister 2	2
Minnie	2
Mungo.....	2
Mark.....	1
Soldier 1	1
Sylvia	1

CAST LIST IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER (WITH LINE COUNT)

N.B. In the following list, the number shows how many spoken lines each role has. An asterisk (*) before the character's name indicates that this character ALSO has solo or featured sung lines.

Aunty Chrissy	8
Celia	2
Cindy	5
Cook	4
Cynthia	2
Dad	3
James	2
Jesse	2
John	2
Joseph	6
* King 1	6
* King 2	7
* King 3	5
King Herod.....	9
Madge.....	4
Maid 1	2
Maid 2	2
Marjorie.....	2
Mark.....	1
Mary.....	5
Maureen	3
Melanie	2
Messenger 1	5
Messenger 2.....	7
Michaelmas Mouse.....	36
Midge	2
Minister 1	3
Minister 2	2
Minnie	2
Morris.....	4
* Morz	19
Mum.....	4
Mungo.....	2

Narrator 1	30
Narrator 2	23
Sally	4
Sam	3
Sarah	7
Sheep 1	7
Sheep 2	4
Sheep 3	3
Sheep 4	3
Soldier 1	1
Solly	3
Stephen	3
Susie	9
Sylvia	1
Uncle Cedric	5

Non-speaking role: Donkey and a Chorus of Soldiers, Onlookers and Merchants.

CHARACTERS IN EACH SCENE**Introduction**

Narrators 1 & 2

Scene 1

Dad

Madge

Marjorie

Mark

Maureen

Melanie

Michaelmas

Midge

Minnie

Morris

Mum

Mungo

Narrators 1 & 2

Scene 2

Donkey

James

Jesse

John

Joseph

Mary

Narrators 1 & 2

Scene 3

Merchants

Michaelmas

Narrators 1 & 2

Scene 4

Uncle Cedric

Celia

Aunty Chrissy

Cindy

Cynthia

Michaelmas

Morz

Narrator 1

Sally

Sarah

Susie

Sylvia

Scene 5

Michaelmas

Narrators 1 & 2

Sally

Sam

Sheep 1 - 4

Solly

Stephen

Susie

Scene 6

Cindy

Cook

Herod

Maids 1 & 2

Messengers 1 & 2

Michaelmas

Ministers 1 & 2

Morz

Sally

Sarah

Soldier 1

Additional Soldiers
(Optional)**Scene 7**

Kings 1 - 3

Scene 8

Joseph

Kings 1 - 3

Mary

Michaelmas

Narrators 1 & 2

Onlookers

Sally

Sarah

Shepherds 1 - 3

Susie

ALL For Final Song

LIST OF PROPERTIES**Scene 1**

Table..... Scene Prop
 Plates of CheeseMice
 CupsMice
 Tie..... Michaelmas

Scene 2

Sticks etc. for kindling.....Joseph

Scene 3

Bottles, jars, boxes etc. Merchants
 Sign saying “City Mice Welcome” Scene Prop

Scene 4

Chair Scene Prop
 Stick..... Michaelmas

Scene 6

Spears, swords, daggers and shields etc..... Soldiers

Scene 7

Star Scene Prop

Scene 8

Star Scene Prop
 Gold Kings
 Frankincense Kings
 Myrrh Kings
 Toy stuffed lamb Shepherds
 Baby doll..... Mary & Joseph

PRODUCTION NOTES

STAGING

There are eight different settings in this show, which may sound a bit daunting! However, where resources are limited, this can be greatly simplified.

Don't forget to send your comments and pictures to kate@musicline-ltd.com

Introduction - Narrator 1 and Narrator 2 can be positioned at either side of the stage.

Scene One – The Home of Michaelmas Mouse can be set to one side of the acting area. With a small amount of adaption, this scene can be reused for Scene Four as indicated later. The scene is set inside a mouse-hole, perhaps behind a wall in a traditional house of the time. The backdrop to the setting is probably mainly dried mud in colour and has a few mousey ornaments/items adorning it (these would be painted on for ease). It could be a kitchen area, in which case there may be some pots and pans apparently hanging from the wall; there may be a portrait of an elder member of the family such as Great Uncle Bulgaria; there may be a poster saying “Public Enemy Number One” and showing a cat! Let your imagination run riot. There is a table set in the centre of the acting area, set for several (at least six) people (mice), and chairs or stools for the mice to sit at. Shortly after Song One, the scene changes to a couple of short link scenes.

Scene Two – The Journey represents part of the journey by Mary and Joseph and the Donkey, along the road to Bethlehem. This could be performed almost anywhere in the acting area, away from the main sets. It could even be performed as the actors enter the school hall and walk towards the main acting area. Somewhere where the audience can clearly see all of the characters, Mary, Joseph and the Donkey are joined by Jesse, James and John. They all sing Song Two and the scene then changes to another link scene which can be extensively improvised if so wished.

Scene Three – The Marketplace is a typical bazaar type setting of the period. Depending on available resources, this could be simple stalls painted onto a backdrop or could involve the use of tables with a simple frame attached to create a market stall appearance. There can be as many or few as you wish. Suggestions for stalls include groceries (figs, spices, citrus fruits, olives etc.), utensils (pots, pans, ladles, spoons etc.), wine merchant (jars of wines) perfumes and purification (incense, sandalwood, myrrh etc.). This largely depends on how much improvisation you wish to apply to this scene. Clearly, there is no point in making an elaborate setting if the scene is very short staying with the script. However, if you develop the dialogue and follow the suggestions for singing some of the suggested lines, having dancers, tumblers, musicians etc., you might wish to make a more involved set as suggested here. This scene is a simple link to:

Scene Four – The City Mousehole. This is a fairly major scene in the show and could use the original setting for Scene One adapted accordingly. It is obvious that the City Mice are smarter, cleaner and more street-wise than their country cousins and the setting of their house should reflect this. The table could be present, but dressed with a smart table-cloth. The chairs need to be in place (at least one) and could have simple covers over them. In

this scene, Michaelmas confronts Morz, the cat, and ties his tail to a chair. This scene could be acted out with both the cat and Michaelmas present in the acting area or could have the cat 'off-stage' and a large (false) tail appearing on the set.

We then move to **Scene Five – On The Hillside**. Similarly to Scene Two, this could be acted out anywhere in the acting area. It could have a simple setting of rolling hills etc. if resources allow, otherwise just acted in front of the other sets. The characters are journeying along and eventually arrive at:

Scene Six – King Herod's Palace. If resources allow, this could be set with a simple backdrop of stone-walls and pillars. Alternatively, appropriate costuming and characters will create the scene. These could be Soldiers, Centurions, Guards etc. adorned with shields and spears/swords. There are no set items in the acting area, so this can be quite a simple set.

The next setting, **Scene Seven – Outside** does not warrant any backdrop as it is a few seconds in length only and can be acted out almost anywhere away from the main sets.

The final set – **Scene Eight – The Baby** is a traditional Nativity setting. However, the major part of the dialogue is said, before any of the characters arrive in the stable. This could be done close to the audience allowing a distraction whilst the Nativity is set in place. As the crib etc. is brought into place, characters such as shepherds, bystanders etc., crowd into place, with their backs to the audience to form a crowd around the crib and the baby and his parents. This also masks the setting of the scene. They all part as the Kings push through and create the Nativity tableau.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Song One – Michaelmas Mouse is a bright, bouncy number which all of the children can join in with. The song introduces Michaelmas Mouse and tells us of the journey made by the mice to visit their relatives. The tune provides ample opportunity for the children to put simple dance routines to the lyrics.

Song Two – Heading for Bethlehem is a gentle ballad describing the journey by Mary, Joseph and the Donkey to Bethlehem. The song does not need much choreography as it will hold the audience better if it is sung directed at the audience.

Song Three – City Mice is a lively number telling us of the virtues of the City Mice. The lyrics give opportunity for the City Mice to act out their disdain for their country relatives and friends!

Song Four – Morz is a solo by Morz the cat accompanied by the chorus and provides great opportunity for most of the cast to be involved in the song. Changes in the rhythm of the song provide interest in the number whilst the lyrics give great opportunity for playacting out the song.

Song Five – Allelu is a fast-flowing ballad with an instrumental break after the first chorus. This is a great opportunity for a little dance break before the song resumes at verse four.

The song could be sung by a choir whilst the angels dance and provide the movement.

Song Six – Friends Again is an up-tempo swing which could see the children skipping and dancing along with the lyrics as the mice go to find the baby Jesus and the Nativity scene. There is an opportunity for harmonising the chorus sections.

Song Seven – We Are The Three Kings introduces the three Kings to the audience. The choreography is pretty well self-explanatory with simple movements showing their journey, the star in the sky, kneeling at the crib side etc.

Song Eight is a reprise of the opening number (**Michaelmas Mouse**) but sung in the past tense. Similar choreography to the opening number will ensure that the children do not get confused.

COSTUME

The **Mice** could wear grey, one-piece costumes with a headpiece or could simply wear grey shirt and trousers and have a simple card mask for a nose, whiskers and large card ears.

Mary & Joseph wear traditional clothing of the period viz. Joseph is in thigh-length smock and calf-length trousers or a full-length dishdasha. He probably has some sort of apron over the top to hold the tools of his trade (carpenter). Mary is generally seen wearing a white smock and headdress with a blue outer garment over the top.

The **Sheep** could wear a white tunic and have a card face-mask or wear something very woolly and white!

King Herod needs to have a majestic look about him and probably wears a purple dishdasha with a gold robe over the top. Alternatively, he could wear a purple or gold tunic. His head is adorned with a crown. The **Soldiers** would wear typical military uniform of their rank. This could vary quite a bit but would probably involve upper body plated body armour, a bright coloured tunic, a helmet and sandals. They might carry a spear, a sword, a shield and a dagger. His **Ministers** would wear something akin to a priest's white alb. This is a full-length smock tied with a cord. The **Messengers** would more likely be attired in a similar fashion to the soldiers, but without the body armour and weapons.

Morz, the cat, could be dressed in a cat-skin costume or black leotard and suitable face mask.

All of the other characters could be dressed in typical Christmas Nativity outfits (including tea-towel headdress), modified in some way to account for their role i.e. **Cook** might wear a cook's hat, the **Maids** might wear mop-caps etc. As this is a light-hearted show artistic licence is to be encouraged in whatever areas it seems appropriate.

LIGHTING AND SOUND

There are no specific lighting or sound effects required in this show.

Lighting

It is not necessary to use stage lighting to produce this show. However, if equipment and skills are available, focussed lighting on the acting areas will allow a smooth transition between scenes and also create the appropriate mood. The lack of suitable lighting will not detract from the show.

Sound Effects (SFX)

There are no sound effects indicated in this show.

INTRODUCTION

- NARRATOR 1:** Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, we present the story of Michaelmas Mouse.
- NARRATOR 2:** Michaelmas Mouse lived a long, long time ago in a land, far, far away a life very difficult to imagine.
- NARRATOR 1:** Especially if you are not a mouse!
- NARRATOR 2:** Where he lived was a bit of a hole, Nazareth in fact.
- NARRATOR 1:** He doesn't mean that Nazareth was a hole, just that Michaelmas lived in a hole in Nazareth.
- NARRATOR 2:** Oh just let's watch and find out.

SCENE ONE: THE HOME OF MICHAELMAS MOUSE

(The scene is set in the home of Michaelmas Mouse. Mice are laying the table for a going away party.)

- MINNIE:** Oh I'm so excited Madge. I do so love parties.
- MADGE:** Me too, especially when there is so much cheese.
- MIDGE:** A party wouldn't be a party without cheese.
- MADGE:** There's only one thing better than a plate of cheese, and that's two plates of cheese.
- MAUREEN:** It is rather sad though... Michaelmas is going away.
- MELANIE:** Oh, it's not for long. He's only going on holiday to his city cousins.
- MINNIE:** And when he gets back there will be another excuse to have another party.
- MARJORIE:** And more cheese!
- MIDGE:** Lots of lovely...
- ALL:** Cheese!

(The Boy Mice enter in a scuffle.)

- MICHAELMAS:** Did we hear you say cheese? Come on fellas!

(They sit, making a terrible din and mess.)

- MADGE:** Oh Michaelmas, we just spent such a long time making the table look nice.
- MICHAELMAS:** Sorry Madge.
- MAUREEN:** Michaelmas, that's very naughty of you. Look at the mess... and you have got cheese pie all over your new going away tie.

- MORRIS:** Never mind, it will give him something to eat on the way.
- MELANIE:** Morris, that's horrid.
- MICHAELMAS:** (*Sucking his tie*) It isn't actually, it's very tasty.
- MARJORIE:** They won't like those manners in the city.
- MUNGO:** Well they'll just have to lump it, and talking of lumps, may I have some more cheese please?
- MARK:** I propose a toast!
- MICHAELMAS:** Cheese on mine please.
- MORRIS:** No, he means to wish you luck on your travels. Lady and gentlemice, raise your cheese juice to the one and only Michaelmas Mouse.

TRACK 1:**MICHAELMAS MOUSE**

ALL: MICHAELMAS MOUSE, MICHAELMAS, MICHAELMAS MOUSE.
MICHAELMAS MOUSE, MICHAELMAS, MICHAELMAS MOUSE.
NAZARETH IS WHERE HE'S AT, HEBREW MICE, HEBREW CAT.
MICHAELMAS MOUSE, MICHAELMAS, MICHAELMAS MOUSE.

ABOUT THIS TIME OF YEAR, THE MICE WILL DISAPPEAR
TO GO TO VISIT RELATIVES, IN CITIES FAR AWAY.
BUT BEFORE THEY GO, THEIR HAPPINESS TO SHOW,
MICHAELMAS AND ALL HIS FRIENDS
DANCE THROUGHOUT THE DAY, HEY!

LA LA LA LA, LA LA LA, LA LA LA,
LA LA LA LA, LA LA LA LA.

MICHAELMAS MOUSE, MICHAELMAS, MICHAELMAS MOUSE.
MICHAELMAS MOUSE, MICHAELMAS, MICHAELMAS MOUSE.

WITH CHEESE UPON THEIR LAPS, PINCHED FROM ALL THE TRAPS,
THEY EAT AND DRINK AND LAUGH AND DANCE 'TILL DAY IS DONE.
AND WHEN THE CAT'S ASLEEP, SNORING RATHER DEEP,
THEN'S THE TIME TO LEAVE BY THE SETTING SUN, HEY!

LA LA LA LA, LA LA LA, LA LA LA,
LA LA LA LA, LA LA LA LA.

MICHAELMAS MOUSE, MICHAELMAS, MICHAELMAS MOUSE.
MICHAELMAS MOUSE, MICHAELMAS, MICHAELMAS MOUSE.

HE'LL BE AWAY A WHILE, HE'S GOING MANY MILES
ALONG THE DUSTY ROAD, THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM.
SO DANCE WHILE YOU MAY UNTIL HE GOES AWAY.
MICHAELMAS THE MOUSE WILL SOON RETURN AGAIN, HEY!

LA LA LA LA, LA LA LA, LA LA LA,
LA LA LA LA, LA LA LA LA.

MICHAELMAS MOUSE, MICHAELMAS, MICHAELMAS MOUSE.
MICHAELMAS MOUSE, MICHAELMAS, MICHAELMAS MOUSE.
NAZARETH IS WHERE HE'S AT, HEBREW MICE, HEBREW CAT.
MICHAELMAS MOUSE, MICHAELMAS, MICHAELMAS MOUSE.

(Enter Mum and Dad Mouse.)

- MUM:** Michaelmas, some wonderful news... your father has just heard that Mary and Joseph, you know, the humans upstairs, are going to Bethlehem this very day.
- DAD:** Perhaps you'll be able to hide in the sacks and baggage on the donkey's side.
- MICHAELMAS:** Hey, that sounds great. I won't have to walk.
- MORRIS:** What about the cat?
- DAD:** We won't have any trouble from him. As soon as we heard, I crept out and tipped a whole jug of cream into his dish.
- MICHAELMAS:** I'm not afraid of him anyway. I'm not afraid of any cat!
- MUM:** Well anyway, the cat's asleep now. Come on, they're setting off this very minute.
- ALL:** Bye Michaelmas.
- NARRATOR 1:** And so Michaelmas quickly, and secretly, clambered aboard the pile of bags strapped to the donkey.
- NARRATOR 2:** Soon he felt himself being jogged and jiggled, bounced and swayed from side to side, all of which meant he was on his way to Bethlehem.

SCENE TWO:**THE JOURNEY**

(Mary, Joseph and the Donkey are making their way slowly to Bethlehem.)

- MARY:** Joseph, I still don't understand why we have to go to Bethlehem.
- JOSEPH:** Oh Mary, I've told you twice. The Romans want to count us to see how many people there are in the land.
- MARY:** Well I think it's senseless.
- JOSEPH:** It's a census actually. C.E.N.S.U.S. And yes, we do have to go.
- MARY:** I just hope that I don't have my baby on the way.
- JOSEPH:** Let's rest awhile and I'll make a fire.

(As he works three Travellers appear.)

- JOSEPH:** Hello friends. Are you going to Bethlehem too?
- JAMES:** Yes, to be counted.
- JOHN:** I bet it will be very crowded there.
- JESSE:** We'll be lucky to find a bed I should think.
- MARY:** Joseph, perhaps we won't find anywhere to sleep. Do you think we will?
- JOSEPH:** Now don't you worry about things like that. It will turn out alright, you'll see.
- JAMES:** I'm taking a tent.
- JOHN:** My brother lives there and I'm having his spare bed.

JESSE: I've got a room booked at the inn.

MARY: Oh Joseph, I'm ever so worried.

TRACK 2: **HEADING FOR BETHLEHEM**

ALL: GOING TO BETHLEHEM,
ON THEIR WAY WITH A LITTLE GREY DONKEY,
HEADING FOR BETHLEHEM,
IT'S A LONG LONG WAY ON A DUSTY ROAD.

GOING TO BETHLEHEM,
JOSEPH LEADING THE LITTLE GREY DONKEY,
HEADING FOR BETHLEHEM,
WITH THE BURNING SUN AND A PRECIOUS LOAD.

MOVING ON, MOVING ON, RIDING ON A DONKEY.
MOVING ON, MOVING ON, SLOWLY JOURNEY ON.

GOING TO BETHLEHEM,
MARY SLEEPS BY THE LITTLE GREY DONKEY,
HEADING FOR BETHLEHEM,
UNDER COLD NIGHT SKIES AND A SHINING MOON

GOING TO BETHLEHEM,
NOT FAR NOW FOR THE LITTLE GREY DONKEY,
HEADING FOR BETHLEHEM,
AFTER MANY DAYS THEY WILL GET THERE SOON.

MOVING ON, MOVING ON, RIDING ON A DONKEY.
MOVING ON, MOVING ON, SLOWLY JOURNEY ON.

NARRATOR 1: After several days Michaelmas heard new voices. He peeped out of his saddlebag and had his first sight of Bethlehem. As soon as the donkey was standing still he hopped quickly out into the dusty street.

NARRATOR 2: Bethlehem certainly was busy. Mary and Joseph set off around the city to look for somewhere to stay, while Michaelmas stood amazed at the sights and sounds of what, to a mere country mouse, seemed like an Aladdin's cave.

SCENE THREE:**THE MARKETPLACE**

(There is now scope for a prepared improvisation scene for the market place. Perhaps the children could make up merchants' calls advertising their wares.)

For instance –

Buy my lovely figs... ripe figs
Freshly pressed oil. Oil for your lamps.
Spices from the Orient. Very smelly!
Ivory spoons. Stir yourselves ladies.
Sandalwood, cedarwood.
Pure white wine, sweet white wine.
Cinnamon ladies... get your cinnamon.
Jars, all sizes. Beautiful jars.
Etc.

(Perhaps some of these could be musical. With a little poetic licence, no more than for the rest of the play! It might be good to incorporate dancers, tumblers and musicians into this busy scene.)

NARRATOR 1: Eventually Michaelmas realised that it was getting late, and that he still had to find his way to the hole of his city cousins.

MICHAELMAS: *(To a Trader)* Excuse me, could you tell me where the chief centurion's house is please?

(The Trader directs him whilst the narration continues.)

NARRATOR 2: Well, here he was at last. Tucked away down the side of the centurions' house was a hole with the sign "City Mice... Welcome" written over it.