



TROGG'S CIRCUS
The Musical

**STAGING THE
PRODUCTION**

BY

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SYNOPSIS

Alfred Trogg was a famous circus owner. In the 1930's, he went around the world gathering up exciting and unusual acts.

After the war, his friend Ted Carter, set up a small museum which included a circus stand in which electronic automata of all his friend's famous circus acts were exhibited. The stand was the most popular one in the museum and people flocked to see it.

When Ted died, his money-grabbing son, Max took over the running of the museum. By now the automata had faded and looked shabby. Max wanted to replace the stand with a space one and was trying to do a deal with the London Science Museum to get some of the exhibits they no longer needed.

Max got rid of the old curator and brought in a younger man who cost him less money. The new curator, Peter, was fascinated by the circus stand and couldn't understand why Max wanted to get rid of something so unique.

On his first day as Peter was locking up to go home, a group of disaffected youngsters, who had never been in the museum before because they couldn't afford the prices, came in through one of the open windows to shelter from the rain.

That night Alfred Trogg and the automata came to life when they realised their future was threatened. Peter and the youngsters witnessed this and vowed to come up with a plan to save the circus stand.

Peter told the youngsters they could come back to the museum at night to work on their plan provided they attended school in the daytime. They agreed. Fortunately, at their school that week, a circus team arrived to teach the children circus skills.

Peter discovered from a local antique dealer that the automata were really valuable. So the children made a plan to raise money to renovate the automata by organising a one-night circus show at the museum. With the help of the antique dealer and the automata themselves, they raise enough money to save the famous circus characters.

CHARACTER PARTS

Character	Number of words	Scenes they appear in	Solo or group songs
Peter	876	All	Everyone's good at something
Tom	228	1,	
Una	209	1,3,5,6	Let the sunshine through
Sylvie	159	1,3,5,6	Let the sunshine through
Max	684	1,3,5,6	Money
Tracey	186	1,3,5,6	
Trogg	396	2,4,5,6	
Child 1	258	2,4,5,6	
Child 2	3	2,4,5,6	
Child 3	168	2,4,5,6	
Child 4	243	2,4,5,6	
Child 5	135	2,4,5,6	
Child 6	117	2,4,5,6	
Child 7	110	2,4,5,6	
Science Lady	184	3,	
<i>Tina</i>	27	4,5,6	Life is like a walk on a tightrope
Indira	45	4,5,6	I'm invincible
Addeaddap ipe	132	4,5,6	Hot in the Jungle
Tom McLaren	10	4,5,6	Juggling in the highlands
Mr McLaren	22	4,5,6	Ditto
Mrs McLarem	15	4,5,6	Ditto
Clown 1	22	4,5,6	Clown Song duet
Clown 2	17	4,5,6	Clown Song duet
Clown 3	17	4,5,6	
Antiques Person	128	6	
Teacher	58	6	
Mayor	55	6	

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

Character	Description
Peter	Caring new curator. Worried about the Circus stand being removed and supportive of the youngsters.
Tom	Retiring curator. Sad because of the way that Max Carter has treated him.
Una	Friendly secretary. Hates Max Carter
Sylvie	Friendly Box Office lady – also hates Max Carter
Max	Money-grabbing owner of the Museum that he inherited from his much-loved dad Ted Carter
Tracey	Max's shopaholic girlfriend
Trogg	Famous Circus owner from the 1930s. Comes to life
Child 1	Leader of the group
Child 2	Sport – elective mute. Speaks in the last scene.
Child 3	Caring child
Child 4	The group joker
Child 5	Shy child
Child 6	Artistic type
Child 7	Very vain, wears flashy clothes
Science Lady	Posh, intellectually type
Tina	Tightrope walker.
Indira	The strong woman
Addeaddapipe	The Lion Tamer
Mr & Mrs McLaren & their son & daughter	The Juggling family.
3 Clowns	Male & female couple that are fond of one another and sing a sad duet. 3rd Clown who wishes they'd stop squabbling.
Antiques Person	Business person & antique expert. Discovers that the Circus stand automata (models) are very valuable and offers to work with Max.
Teacher	Teacher of the truanting children. Small part in finale scene
Mayor	Small part in final scene. Congratulates Max for being generous.

COSTUMES and MAKE-UP

Alfred Trogg	Ring master's outfit. Circus Owner in the 1930s.
Max	Loud suit - cigar. Big eyebrows
Tracey	Flashy dress and fake fur stole. Loud make-up
Peter	Overall
Sylvie	Adult outfits with makeup
Una	ditto
Tom	Overall
Children	They can dress as they please.
Two	Track suit and trainers
Six	Always has a sketchbook in her hand.
Seven	Expensive looking casual clothes
Science person	Suit and glasses Light make-up

All the circus character will need two outfits. One drab and worn, the other bright and new.

The Tartan Jugglers	Kilts & sporrans with white shirys. Wigs. Moustaches for the men. Light make-up for women.
Tina, the Tightrope Walker	Tutu type outfit. Pale face make-up
Three Clowns	Clown outfits - White faces, red nose Big eyes
Addeaddapipe	Fake leopard outfit. Dark face paint
Indira the Invincible	Flashy Leotard with big weightlifters Belt. Dark face paint.

Other Parts

Youth worker	Sporty casual wear, Light make-up
Mayor	Smart outfit with Mayoral chain. Light make-up
Antique dealers	Suits - Light make-up
Teacher	Smart outfit. Light make-up

Dancers This depends on whether you include dancers. I've had tappers and ballet tightrope walkers. Leotards with glittery skirts or trousers + waistcoats. Sparkly face make-up.

Choir: Colourful tee shirts, red noses & clown hats

Check that children are not allergic to make-up.

AUDITIONS

You could use the excerpt below or choose your own selection.

Read the story to the children first. Give them a couple of chances to read through the lines. For those who cannot read well, give them a simple line to repeat so that they can feel included.

Pick those children whose voices can be heard at the back of the hall for your speaking parts.

Tracey: Maxie, are you sure you want to get rid of the circus stand? I think it's really charming.

Max: Nah! This is just a pile of junk, babe. You come with me. I'll buy you something worth looking at.

Tracey: Ooooooh!

SONGS and MUSIC

PHOTOCOPIABLE SONG SHEET

CD WITH:

- SONG VOCAL CD FOR PRACTICE
- SONG BACKING TRACKS FOR ACTUAL PERFORMANCE
- LINK-UP MUSIC
- SOUND EFFECTS

MUSICAL SCORE

SONGS in order of appearance :

Money - Max

Let the sunshine through - Una and Sylvie

Juggling in the Highlands - Choir

Everyone's good at something - Peter

Life is like a walk on a tightrope - Tina

I'm Invincible - Indira

The Clown's Song - The clown partners

Hot in the Jungle - Addeaddapipe

The Circus is coming - Choir

Finale : FRIENDS - first the children, then
Everyone

Trogg's Circus LINK-UP Music

All songs should be choreographed if stage performers are singing them. They can be backed by choir or sung completely by the choir if children lack confidence doing solos.

SOUND EFFECTS

Telephone ringing

Lions roaring

Lions banging against the cellar door

Addeaddapipe's pipe music

DANCE

Let the Sunshine Through - Tap dancing looks good. Simple steps will do.

Life is like a walk on a tightrope – Scope for some ballet steps. Small ballet troupe to accompany Tina would look good. Simple ballet steps, knee bends, leaps, twists and turns.

Hot in the jungle – Good back-up group acting out the song.

The Circus is coming - This looks good as a choreographed parade with all the characters coming on one at a time to do a small part of their act and then all together in a circle. Glitter ball effect looks good with this.

All the songs need some simple choreography to stop the cast looking wooden.

SCENERY and PROPS

Circus backdrop - include some old Circus posters.

Something resembling Hay bales to make a circus ring - (the real thing is a fire risk and also very messy as the hay keeps falling out.)

The children themselves will be the automata. (They need to sit quietly under dustsheets - not easy - throughout the play, or create stands for them to slip into when their scene comes up. Each exhibit needs a sign, a start button and a Fact Card.

Clowns: Buckets, mops and wooden planks.

Jugglers: Things that resemble Bagpipes, logs and Haggises to juggle with.

Tightrope Walker: A balancing bar.

Strong Woman : Bed of nails, Iron Bar, Directory, model of a man and a lorry on a string.

The Lion Tamer: Pipe

Scene One

Automata with covers on

Two Mangy Lions

Leaving present for Tom.

Tray of drinks to celebrate Tom's retirement.

Scene Two

Juggle equipment

Scene Three

Tea and biscuits

Notepad for the Science person

Science person's business card

Scene Four

Addeaddapipe's pipe

Scene Five

Big tape measure and clip board

Addeaddapipe's Pipe

Rubbish sack

"Van Gogh's" posters

Scene Six

All the circus act props will be needed for this scene as they parade to

"The Circus is Coming"

THE McCLAREN CLAN OF MONTROSE

These Jugglers were first seen at the Fort William Highlandgames in 1931. They caused an enormous stir.

They started their act juggling bagpipes and then went on to big logs, and finally ended up with Haggis.

So popular were they that they were invited to open each of the Highland Games every year, and thousands came to see them.

TINA THE TIGHTROPE WALKER FROM TORONTO

Tina always wanted to be a ballerina when she was little. She practised for hours and hours when she was a child and starred in lots of school productions. One day her cat got stuck on the roof and Tina went up and rescued him. Everyone held their breath in horror as she walked along the apex of the roof. So good was her balance that when she picked up the cat she did a little pirouette on the roof before bringing it back down to safety. Everyone watching applauded this amazing feat.

Then on a holiday to the Lake District at the age of 14, she rescued a woman from Sharp Edge, one of the most dangerous ridges on the mountain Blencathra. Again an audience gathered to watch this amazing girl and as she descended the ridge, she pirouetted and bowed to them and they applauded her enthusiastically.

It wasn't until she was 19 years old that Alfred Trogg discovered her. He was visiting Niagara Falls at the time and Tina was about to attempt to cross the falls on a tightrope. Wearing her best ballet tutu, she daintily danced away across the thundering waters. On both sides of the Falls the audience screamed and cheered as they watched her finally complete the crossing.

Alfred was waiting to sign her up as the most famous tightrope walker of all time. She appeared in his circus shows during the 30s, and people came from all over the world, especially Canada, to see this wonderful act.

INDIRA THE INVINCIBLE

Indira was born to a poor family in Madras. She was the only girl in a family of 10. She helped at home, all day long as a child, whilst her brothers sat idly by.

By the time she was 10 years old she was able to bring the elephants back by herself. They were carrying huge logs, which the villagers used to build houses with. Sometimes Indira would pick up the logs that the elephants dropped and put them back in their curled trunks.

No one realised just how strong she had become until the day that Alfred Trogg was visiting Madras. A big lorry had broken down at the foot of a hill and needed to be moved. Indira used a rope, which she attached to the lorry, and then with her teeth, she dragged it up the hill.

Alfred signed her immediately. Indira was very happy to leave her lazy brothers and went off to train with Alfred. She could lift enormous weights; lie on beds of nails; and bend iron bars; as well as tear up telephone directories with her bare hands.

People came from miles around to see this Indian wonder and she stayed with Trogg's Circus throughout the 30s until the war began.

ADDEADDAPIPE THE LION TAMER

Alfred Trogg, founder of the famous TROGGS CIRCUS, discovered Addeaddepipe when he was in darkest Africa on Safari. He heard beautiful pipe music coming through the jungle and went off to discover what it was.

He arrived at a clearing close to a water hole. There, to his amazement, lying on the ground with her head in a lion's mouth, relaxing, was a young woman playing a simple pipe that made the most beautiful music. Around her lay other lions fast asleep snoring.

Alfred Trogg approached her very cautiously, because he didn't want to wake the lions and find himself being eaten by them. He left a note by her side inviting her to join his circus.

The lions and Adde were all shipped to England. During the 30s, the act was very popular and people flocked from all over the world to see it, especially from darkest Africa.

THE SLOW BOAT CLOWNS

Alfred Trogg, founder of the famous TROGGS CIRCUS, discovered these amazing clowns when he was on a slow boat to China. The trip was very long and during the evening, the Captain would put on acts to entertain his passengers.

One particular evening, Trogg was thrilled to be entertained by the Slow Boat Clowns.

During their amazing act, they completely swabbed the decks of the ship. They threw buckets of imaginary water over the passengers; bumped into one another; rode a car around the deck; squabbled with brooms and planks of wood and generally had the passengers falling about laughing.

So taken with the act was Trogg, that he signed them up immediately.

The act was very popular during the 30s. People came from all over the world to see them perform, particularly from China.