



2014

Bunnicula by Jon Klein; Music by Chris Jeffries

Rebeca Diane Wallin
rebecawallin@yahoo.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr>

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Wallin, Rebeca Diane (2014) "Bunnicula by Jon Klein; Music by Chris Jeffries," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 34 : Iss. 1 , Article 17.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol34/iss1/17>

This Play Review is brought to you for free and open access by the All Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Children's Book and Media Review by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

Author: Klein, Jon

Title: Bunnacula

Music: Jeffries, Chris

Year of Publication: 1996

Publisher: Plays for Young Audiences

ISBN: n/a, pdf perusal

Number of pages: 60

Rating: Excellent

Reading/Interest Level: Preschool; Primary; Intermediate

Keywords: James Howe; Deborah Howe; Children's Book Adaptations; Children's Theatre; Theatre for Young Audiences; Dracula; Pets;

Production Requirements: Set with slightly oversized pieces, simple costumes with just hints for animal characters. Large rabbit puppet run by experienced puppeteer. Sound for musical numbers.

Number of Acts: 1

Estimated Runtime: 90 minutes

Number of Characters: 6

Cast Requirements: 2 female, 4 male

Time Period: modern

Review:

Based on the novel by James and Deborah Howe, playwright Jon Klein has created a funny, engaging and slightly scary script that stays quite true to the original work. When the Monroe family brings home a new pet rabbit found at a movie theater during a viewing of Dracula, (which they aptly name Bunnacula,) the family pets are suspicious. When white vegetables drained of all their juices begin showing up, Chester the cat launches an investigation and attempts to prove to Howard the dog and the humans that Bunnacula is a dangerous vampire.

The silly jokes and somewhat pun-based dialogue present in the original story make an appearance in this adaptation creating a playful, fun and silly script that children and their parents will appreciate. The characters of Harold the Dog and Chester the Cat, which the script specifies should be played with only hints of animal characteristics, are believable and well-rounded, helping to pull off the far-fetched premise. Bunnacula is represented by a puppet accompanied on-stage by a puppeteer. Using a puppet to portray the rabbit helps give him an air of mystery and is a suitable choice since Bunnacula never speaks. With Bunnacula's lack of lines, an experienced and talented puppeteer is

necessary to give the character life. The play includes several musical numbers which are adequate, though not remarkable, and help with story and mood. With a scaled down set this show would be a good school touring option, especially with its connection to popular children's literature.

Reviewer: Rebeca Wallin

TEXT © The Children's Book and Play Review 2014