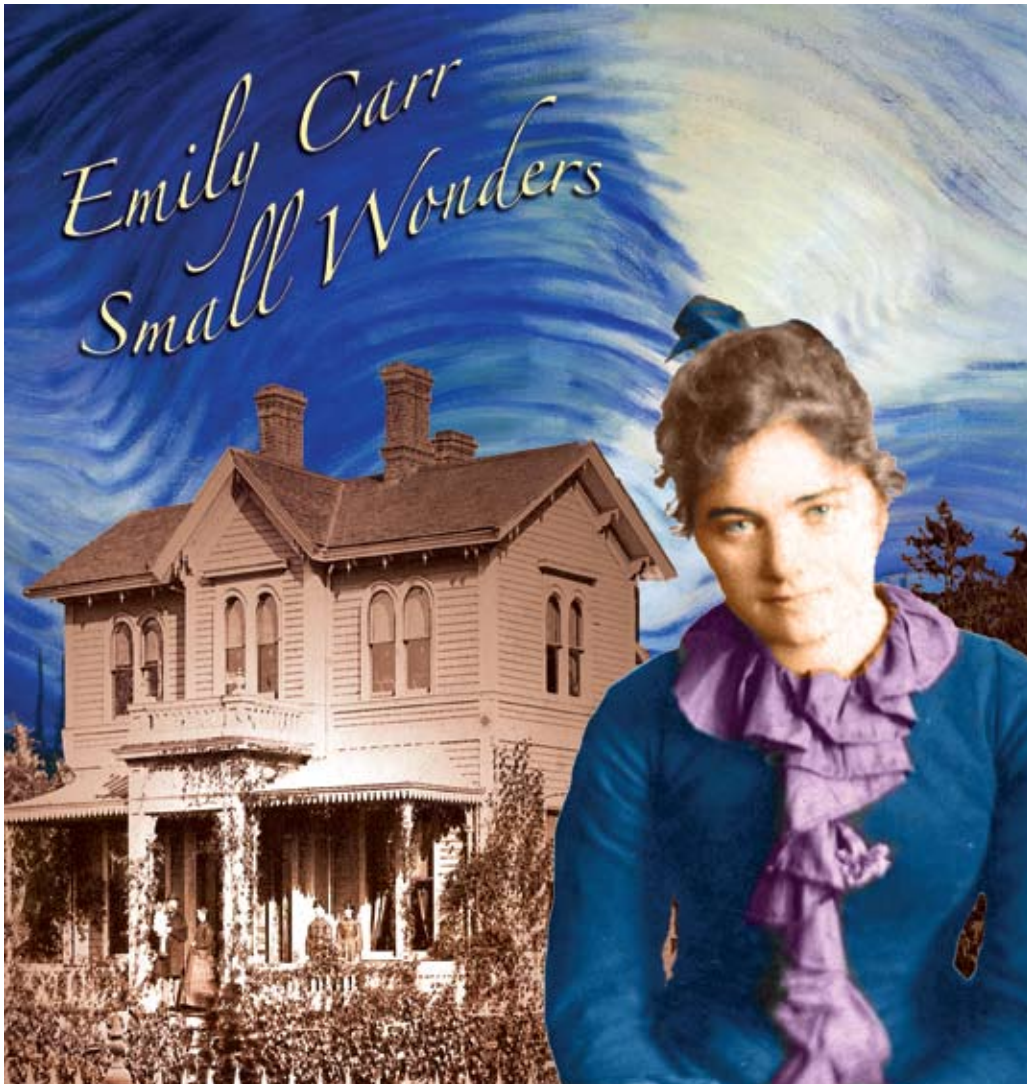


STUDY GUIDE



🌿 Canadiana Musical Theatre Co. 🌿

About the Play

Before Emily Carr became a famous painter and writer, she was a wild child off on her own adventure, turning her Victorian world upside down. Her sisters were scandalized by her unruly behaviour, but this curious, perceptive, sensitive child would rather have joined the circus than become the proper English girl that her family desired.

"**Small Wonders**" celebrates the young life of a girl whose intense passion for nature, animals, and art enabled her to escape the narrow confines of her Victorian era.

Playwright / Composer

Born in Calgary, Allen Desnoyers (A.R.C.T.) studied classical piano in Victoria, B.C., a few blocks away from Emily Carr's childhood home. Creator of the first musicals at the Alberta's Rosebud Dinner theatre (where he launched the Rosebud Opera House), he also co-founded Vancouver's Pacific Theatre. A three-time Jessie nominee, he launched Canadiana Musical Theatre Co. in 2000 to produce his original touring musicals.

About the Canadiana Musical Theatre Company

Trekking across Western Canada, the Canadiana Musical Theatre Company has performed over three thousand shows for over a million students, teachers, and parents. Canada's greatest true adventures come to life as actor/musicans recreate pivotal events in hilarious, dramatic and magical musicals. These musicals have explored two different gold rushes, the fur trade, the great explorers, the building of the railway, the settlement of the West, the coming of the Mounties, and even travelling vaudeville entertainers. From boogie-woogie to bluegrass, ragtime to rock and roll, each musical has its own unique style.

Small Wonders features lush orchestral arrangements as well as folk songs played live.

CANADIANA MUSICAL THEATRE COMPANY
www.canadianamusical.com
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Emily Carr - Small Wonders

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Emily Carr and "Small"

Emily Carr is not only considered one of Canada's greatest painters, she was also a gifted writer whose personal stories made her more famous during her lifetime than her paintings. She also loved music, playing guitar and mandolin, and sang at charity fundraisers.

Born in Victoria in 1871, the same year B.C. joined Canada, she was the youngest of five sisters, and considered her Father's favorite child. She grew up in a time when horses and cows wandered the streets, and loved to spend her childhood hours among the animals on her Father's property, singing to the cow and playing in the mud. First nations people lived close by and she was always excited to find out more about them. Later, they would call her "Klee-Wyck" or "the laughing one", the name she used for her first book.



In her Father's strict, religious home mixed with English traditions that emphasized manners and etiquette, Emily stood out as an oddity. Her passionate, emotional, artistic nature did not easily adapt to stuffy rules and regulations. As a child, she responded impulsively to her natural surroundings even when it upset her more obedient sisters.

*It happened many times, and it always happened just in that corner of the old garden. When it was going to happen, the dance in your feet took you there without your doing anything about it. You danced through the flower garden and the vegetable garden till you came to the row of currant bushes, and then you danced down it. (excerpt **The Book of Small**)*

She began drawing at a young age and her Father was so impressed with her ability, he paid her a \$5 gold piece to draw the rest of the family and arranged for her to study painting. A poor student in school (especially math), she preferred to draw animals on her fingernails or in her schoolbooks.

She was still a teenager when her parents died, and her desire to become a painter propelled her to study in San Francisco, London, and eventually France, where she learned a new style of art called impressionism. These painting techniques showed her new ways to convey her "impressions", her feelings for the spirit of her subjects: from totem poles and native villages, to the great Westcoast rainforests. To sketch and paint these subjects, she bravely travelled to far flung locations by boat and canoe in an era where women were not known to travel by themselves.



"**The Book of Small**", Emily Carr's second book, told of her childhood growing up in a Victorian home in a humorous and unique style. Filled with stories of her love of animals and nature, she describes the early days of Canada when new settlers adjusted to life in "The New World". Fort Victoria began as a fur trading post, but the gold rush attracted thousands of immigrants - including her English Father. She portrayed how old traditions clashed with new realities through the eyes of her younger self whom she called "Small" described as "... full of gaiety in laughter, reacting to joy and sorrow, quick-tempered, tender, devoted, and loyal.", but also, "a scallywag" (a rascal).

Richard Carr in the Victorian Era



Richard Carr was a self-made, English "gentleman" who made a small fortune in the California gold rush as a merchant. He preferred British values to American values and made an attempt to return to England after his time in San Francisco. However, he found England more restrictive than he recalled, especially after experiencing life in "The New World" (ie. North America). In the merchant class in North America, a man's worth or status wasn't simply measured by family connections, but by the measure of his accomplishments.

Still, Richard held a deep affection for all things related to his former country and decided the town of Victoria in the colony of British Columbia was the next best thing to living in Britain. Named after Queen Victoria, the town was founded on English values and clearly intended to keep them.

"Father had this fire-place specially built just like the ones in England. The oven fitted right up to it. He thought everything English was much better than anything Canadian." (*The Book of Small*)

He was fifty three when Emily was born, and it was rare that she saw him as anyone other than a straight, upright Englishman. A stern man who expected his family to jump to attention whenever he commanded, he let slip an occasional twinkle of the eyes that hinted at a rare sense of humor. Besides his love of birds and trees, his admiration for native people, and his delight at Emily's artwork, he had been a real traveller and adventurer - the kind of person Emily would later become.



Emily's home that Richard Carr built

Emily Carr was 7 years old when this map was made of Victoria

Emily Carr House and the Cow Barn

The house where Emily grew up is a National Historic site that you can visit in Victoria, BC.

See the website at www.emilycarr.com



Emily's sisters on the front porch.



Carr House present day

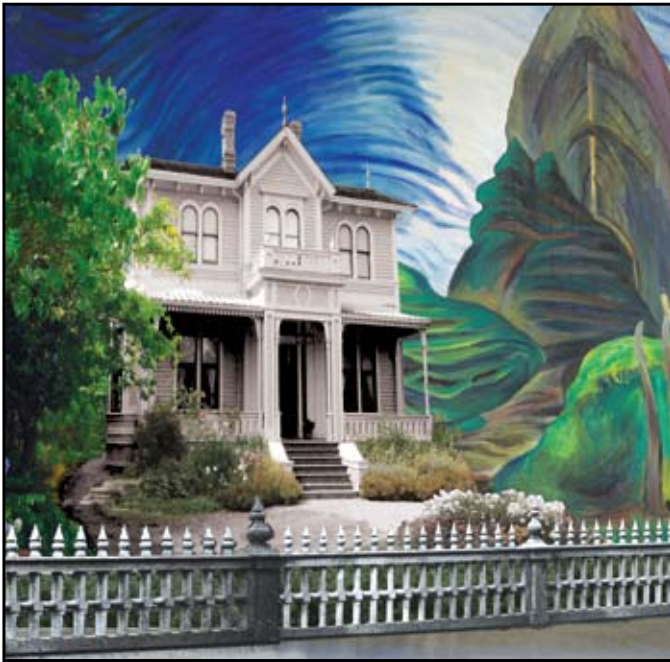
EDUCATIONAL.
MISS M. CARR will conduct outdoor sketching classes, from May 1. Those wishing to join kindly send names at once to Miss M. Carr, 44 Carr street. Special children's classes on Saturdays.

Emily played in the Cow pasture behind the house as a child, but upon her return from art school, she taught in the same pasture, before converting the barn into a studio.



These two pictures of the cow barn were drawn by Madge Wolfenden, a student at Emily's outdoor sketching classes.

Paintings used in Small Wonders set



Emily Carr, *Quiet*, 1942,
oil on canvas, 111.76 x 68.58 cm,
Collection of Michael Audain
and Yoshiko Karasawa
Photo: Rachel Topham,
Vancouver Art Gallery

Our set design was assisted by a long-time painting instructor from Emily Carr College, Susan Hillman (born the very day Emily Carr passed away). It combines photographs of Emily Carr House and portions from two Carr paintings (used with permission).



Emily Carr, *Above the Gravel Pit*,
1937, oil on canvas, 77.2 x 102.3 cm,
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery,
Emily Carr Trust
Photo: Trevor Mills,
Vancouver Art Gallery

Emily Carr - the writer

Emily Carr was a unique and successful writer even though she admitted, "spelling and punctuation were such a horrible trial to me". Fortunately, Ira Dilworth, a neighbor down the street and principal from her former high school became her editor; proofreading and suggesting corrections. She said, "his kindness lifted a tremendous load from me, just as if he had kicked all the commas, full stops, quotes and capitals right to another planet."

She made it a point not to use a big word if a little one could do. For subject matter, she drew from personal experience: from childhood (*The Book of Small*), her encounters with first nations (*Klee Wyck* - which won a governor general award), her years as a landlady (*The House of All sorts*), and her journey to become an artist (*Growing Pains*). Additional stories and journals were published after her death.

Her observations and recollections are often humorous and filled with poignant details. Her friend Flora Burns said of her, "She could see the ridiculous in any situation." She made up whimsical poems and stories to make her friends laugh and even wrote and illustrated comics for the newspaper. Here is a sample of her verse:

Arithmetic you nasty thing
Wen ere I think of thee
My brain gets muddled
My thoughts get fuddled
I'm stupid as I can be.

A "lost" journal of her trip to Alaska with her sister has only been found in the last year, and it's filled with funny cartoons and keen observations.

SAMPLES OF HER WRITING

"The wind was rough and growled round corners. The flakes bumped and tumbled against each other see who could hit Earth first. They could not steer at all, and, if there was a tree or roof or telephone wire in the way they had to sit down on that and wait till the wind came and set them going again. The White Earth would not let night come down and Kept Dark up in the sky that night. When the front door opened, a troop of snowflakes rushed in, but the big hall stove sent them to nowhere."

"Pianos spill horrible noises - spitting it through their black and white teeth."

"She always saw her thoughts much clearer when her eyes were shut."

"One goose behind the other, a live necklace flung across the throat of heaven."

"Her tongue is sharp enough to mow the lawn!"

"Auntie undertook to discipline me for two years each vacation: the year that was past and the year to come".

Emily and the circus

An ad for a circus that came to Victoria when Emily was 11 years old.

COMING ! COMING !

Westman's Great Eastern
CIRCUS!

Will give two Performances in Victoria on
**TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY EVENINGS, AUG.
8TH AND 9TH.**

EDUCATED HORSES, FUNNY CLOWNS,
LOFTY TUMBLING, FEATS OF STRENGTH
Gortesque Comicalities, Numerous Novelties, etc.
Previous to the Performance Professor Blondin, the
daring Funambulist, will make an outside
ASCENSION ON THE TIGHT ROPE,
FREE TO ALL.

Will exhibit on the lot corner Johnson and Doug-
las streets. Performance in the Ring to commence
at 8 o'clock.
ADMISSION ONE DOLLAR; Children under 12
years of age, 50 cents. au3 1w

" If I don't join a circus and ride a white horse through hoops of fire, I may marry a farmer, if he has plenty of creatures."
(The Book of Small)



From a young age Emily adored animals - her cow, the dog, the cats, the chickens and also birds that would come to the yard. She often enjoyed their company more than other children - she less fond of dressup and tea parties.

In her teens, she tamed a Crow and called it "Crocker". Later, she not only bred hundreds of sheep dogs, she had a white rat called Peggy, a chipmunk named Joseph, Jane the green talking parrot, budgies, canaries and Sallie the white cockatoo.

Her favored "child" was **Woo the monkey**. Emily would stroll to the market in Victoria with her monkey in a baby carriage and a couple dogs trailing behind. With the menagerie of animals that followed around beside her, it was like watching an animal circus parade arriving.



Synopsis for younger students



Emily at a Picnic with "Crocker" the crow on her arm

“Small” was the name Emily Carr called herself in her books. Since she was named after her mother, in her family she was known as “Millie” .

Millie was a handful to her family. Her four older sisters easily learned the English manners their Father, Richard Carr, taught them. But Millie found it difficult to do what others wanted. Her wild imaginings got her into all sorts of predicaments and usually that meant getting her dress covered in mud.

Her mother was often ill during her lifetime and Emily's older sisters, especially Dede and Lizzie, tried to discipline her. Emily often felt hurt by their comments that accused her of being "beastly" or "unladylike".

Still, she was her Father's favorite child. He loved her “idle chatter” as they walked toward his warehouse hand in hand. When Emily began drawing, Richard became her first customer, buying several copies of her drawings to give to others and paying for her to study drawing and painting before she was ten years old.

She was a young teenager when her Mother passed away and when her Father died soon after, she was an orphan. Her oldest sister Dede was in charge, but Emily found her more strict than her strict Father. She wanted to go away to study painting.

This musical will introduce students to the funny, wonderful person that was Emily Carr as she struggled for acceptance and learned to embrace her unique gifts, even if it meant she would be considered an "Oddity".



Color Emily's monkey Woo !

*(From the Emily Carr at home and at work
website. Used with permission)*

Activities

We highly recommend this particular website developed by Emily Carr House that suggests activities for particular grades:

<http://bcheritage.ca/emilycarrhomework/guide/index.htm>

DRAWING

When she was eight, Emily drew a picture of her dog that her Father kept in a drawer for a keepsake. She used a stick of charcoal from the fireplace. Choose a pet or an animal to draw and use either charcoal, pencil, ink, or pencil crayon.



PAINTING

Emily Carr used to teach painting to many students in Vancouver and in Victoria.

Carol Pearson describes what Emily emphasized:

"Any fool can copy Child, if he tries long enough; what you are to do is create, get the feeling of your subject and put that there."

Pick a subject and try to paint how it makes you feel.

WRITING

Nearly everything Emily wrote was based on her own life and her experiences. Sometimes, she altered or invented details to make the stories more interesting.

Choose a story from your own life and write about it as creatively as you can. If you need to, combine more than one memory, change this around, add other characters if you like.

COMBINATION

Write a short humorous poem about an incident and illustrate it with a drawing.

Additional Resources

There are many excellent resources online:

www.emilycarr.com

www.bcheritage.ca/emilycarrhomework/

www.emilycarrconnections.com

BOOKS

(younger readers down to older readers)

Emily Carr
by Terry Barber

Discovering Emily and Emily's Dream
by Jacqueline Pearce

Emily Carr's Woo
by Constance Horne

Emily Carr's Attic
by Diane Carmel Léger

The Book of Small
A little town and a little girl
by Emily Carr

Emily Carr at the edge of the world
Jo Ellen Bogart

Emily Carr
by Rosemary Nerring (The Canadians series)

ARTWORK

Vancouver Art Gallery
www.emilycarrart.ca

Victoria Art Gallery
www.aggv.ca/collection/emily-carr