



Emily Carr with Woo

Credit: BCA G-02845

Woo Monkey Tales

Excerpted from *Emily Carr Vignettes* by
Barbara Poggemiller

Stage Notes: This production requires minimal cost and preparation. It is up to your director to decide how to approach the pauses between scenes. You can research Emily's world through the Learning Portal and the Royal BC Museum website to help with costume and set ideas. Emily Carr was born in 1871 and died in 1945. You might notice some differences between the way people talked then and how we talk now.

Characters

Emily Carr
Storyteller
Pet Shop Owner
Woo (puppet or stuffy)

Emily: Is that tiny monkey boy or girl?

Pet Shop Owner: Girl

Emily: What is her price?

Pet Shop Owner: Would you consider even trade for one of your griffon pups?

Emily: Deal.

Woo: Woo, woo, woo!

Emily: When night fell she began to miss the warmth of the other monkeys.

Woo: Woo, woo, woo!

Emily: Woo, woo, woo. I had intended to call my monkey Jemima, but she named herself Woo that first night and Woo she remained for life.

Woo: Woo, woo, woo!

Emily: Woo found her way into all hearts — merry, unexpected Woo!

Storyteller: When Emily took Woo to meet her griffon dogs for the first time Woo stretched a tiny black-palmed hand and caught a stubby tail in both her hands and dragged the surprised pup to her side. With a twist she turned him right about and seized his whiskers. Woo glared into his eyes. The pup did not flinch but gave her stare for stare. Woo let go of his whiskers and began combing his hair with her fingers. From that day, Ginger Pop and Woo were inseparable companions, romping and playing like puppies.

Emily made Woo a little dress to keep her warm in the chilly winters. It was short and wide as a ballet skirt with a red apron over it. Bobbing around Emily's garden, she looked like a poinsettia bloom. She sat at the top of the cherry tree, eating cherries like a queen.

Woo held Emily's hand mirror with her feet and she kissed and kissed the other monkey in the mirror. Emily held one of Woo's small warm hands in hers and Woo murmured, "Woo woo".

(pause)

Storyteller: One day while Emily scribbled notes, getting ready to give a talk about her paintings, Woo stole over to her paint box and with her tail, whipped a large tube of yellow paint towards her foot. Her foot gave it into her hand and then when Emily glanced up from her writing ...

Emily: Woo! Woo!

Storyteller: Monkey, rug and bench were yellow as daffodils. Woo was very, very sick.

Emily: (Emily picks up Woo and the phone rings) Hello.

Artist: Ya Miss Carr...dis talk you are making...is she ready?

Emily: No talk...My monkey is dying.

Artist: What ails leetle monkey?

Emily: A whole tube of yellow paint.

Artist: Dat monkey... she eat paint?

Emily: Yes.

Artist: Bad, ver' ver' bad. Yellow most poisonest of all paint. Leetle monkey die for sure...too bad!

Emily: Goodbye! (slamming down the reciever)

Storyteller: Suddenly Woo was very, yellowly sick: then she sat up... shook herself and ate grapes.

Woo: Woo, woo, woo!

Emily: Woo! Oh Woo!

(pause)

Storyteller: One morning the pup took a juicy bone up to visit Woo. He had intended to eat it while Woo was combing his hair. Woo seized the bone, but it was greasy. Woo hated grease. She put the bone where pup couldn't get it, climbed the clothesline and whipped a clean towel off the line. Woo wrapped the bone in the towel and wiped her hands free of grease. Then she chewed a hole in the towel and gnawed the bone grease free!

Storyteller: Once a hen stole a scrap from Woo's food dish. Leaping from her tree, Woo tore the tail off the small hen. The hen squawked, the rooster rushed upon Woo like a hurricane! He struck Woo with his beak and spur. Woo was afraid. The rooster attacked again. Woo ducked her face into her dress (petticoats) and the rooster flew clean over her. The rooster landed and Woo grabbed a handful of feathers. He rushed at Woo. Woo ducked, the rooster landed and Woo grabbed a handful of feathers. He rushed at Woo. Woo ducked. If Emily hadn't torn them apart they would have fought to the bitter end.

Woo's Day

Emily: One day Woo was a terrible monkey
Awefully, woefully, wonderfully monkey
Freed from her chain in the basement she reigned
And Woo seized the day, in her monkiest way!
Freed from her perch on the furnace room wall
She leapt to the floor and had herself a ball!

First flinging wide the great furnace door
She danced and scattered ashes all over the floor
Then nimble to the wall with every hanging thing
She pulled and she pried til each object she could fling
Garden hats and spades, hammers, nails stuck in lime
Tossing them and tasting them, oh what a lovely time!
Soap and oil and turpentine in rivers she made blue
Geraniums unplanted and repotted in the goo
Oh Woo! Oh Woo! Oh Woo ... what did you do?
You've broken everything in sight, you crazy monkey, you!
The next thing she spied with a gleam in her eye
Was a great huge glass container filled with water and with eggs
Its amazing she could tip it with those tiny arms and legs

But tip the thing she did ... yolks and water, glass and ash
The coal pile was an omlette, monkey stew cooked up with hash
But lastly and not leastly, our Miss Woo took up the cause
Of filling every crevice she created , without pause
Taking up a tin of liquid tar in her dainty monkey way
Poured rivers of black sticky mess on everything that lay

Oh Woo, Oh Woo, Oh Woo, what did you do?
You've broken everything in sight, you crazy monkey, you!
Unknown to Woo, this final act was witnessed by her dame
Her Emily stood open mouthed surveying the whole game
When Woo looked up and saw her there, well calmly as you please
She placed the tar upon the floor and glided up with ease
She sat upon the window sill, hands demurely in her lap
Looking out toward the trees, waiting for the slap
Her mistress understood at once, and knew Woo had had fun
Instead of punishing
She cleaned, decided no harm done
Her little monkey had her day, and Emily understood
That what to humans might be bad to Woo this was all good.

Oh Woo, Oh Woo, Oh Woo, what did you do? Oh Woo , oh Woo , oh Woo, I do love you!