



Lost Dog

The Story of Laika- Space Age Hero

A pop-rock musical with words and music by Dr. Jeffrey Levy, veterinarian and certified animal acupuncturist

On, November 3, 1957, a rocket stood tall, ready for lift-off at the Baikonur Cosmodrome in the dusty-heat of the Mongolian Desert. Atop this vehicle sat the pride of the Soviet Union; Sputnik 2- the spherical metallic space-probe with brushed-backed antennae whose launch would represent the ultimate technological achievement of the world proletarian movement. And within this satellite sat, shivering, a tiny eight-pound payload. Her name was Laika, and she was to be the world's first dog in space.

And so the Space-Race was to begin- as would a continuing chapter of that age-old relationship of mankind with the very many creatures which co-inhabit our planet, Earth.

From Laika's humble beginnings as a stray mongrel on the outskirts of Moscow- through her initial training as prototype cosmonaut, to her rise as iconic patriotic figure, and eventual descent, and mysterious demise, Laika remains an enduring emblem of innocence in a sometimes sinister world, and an enchanting symbol of the value of sacrifice for the benefit of the greater good, in a world that sometimes might lack heroic figures.

Lost Dog, *The Story of Laika- Space-Age Hero*, is a pop-rock musical, destined to delight both parents and children, alike. Upbeat melodies and rhythms will please Baby-Boomers of the Rock 'n Roll Generation, while thought-provoking lyrics will engage this adult audience with intriguing questions relating to important issues of morality and ethics. Their children will be captivated with the imagery presented by a vast array of singing animal characters they encounter on the stage, and will be introduced to various uplifting themes related to values of kindness, and responsible pet ownership, as well as

the importance of respect for the great diversity of life that exists on our very fragile planet.

Lost Dog, *The Story of Laika- Space-Age Hero*, would have three intertwining plots; The principle activity, (and many musical numbers) would involve the “Lost Dog”- a wandering character- abruptly thrust into a search to find his way home to his former comfortable loving middle-class family in America, after an incident at a local dog-run that accidentally liberates him from his master. His travels bring him to various locales in the big city and expose him to characters and philosophies very alien to his own.

A second character is our namesake, Laika, with vignettes relating to her life and training in Moscow, as well as her heroic adventure. A third, sub-plot relates to two young lovers and draws sustenance from the romantic nature of several love-lorn ballads.

Lost Dog, *The Story of Laika- Space-Age Hero*, would appeal to the ever-growing market segment of consumers involved in making pet-related purchases. It represents a musical production which recognizes the importance of this group of very dedicated individuals and would empower the audience-goer as benefactor, as partial proceeds of each performance remain earmarked for charitable donations to a selected animal shelter.

In addition, other spin-off products could be created including a children’s book and music CD, animation project, or perhaps a television infomercial highlighting the charitable nature of this endeavor.

The enclosed CD contains performances digitally recorded by **Pet-Rox**, a band founded eleven years ago by veterinarian Jeffrey Levy. **Pet-Rox** consists entirely of individuals who work in various capacities benefiting animal welfare (veterinarians, dog walkers, zookeepers, pet-rescuers, etc.) and has performed at many of the major fund-raising events for animal charities; from the Birthday Party of the ASPCA in Union Square to eight consecutive appearances at the American Cancer Society's Dogswalk in Riverside Park, to Brooklyn's Prospect Park Zoo. All the musical selections performed by this group outwardly relate to the vast array of creatures with which we co-inhabit this planet, but ultimately touch on themes of relevance to the human condition, as well.

All compositions have been penned by Dr. Jeffrey Levy- a housecall veterinarian in New York City, and draw inspiration from his years of dedicated humanitarian service to the people and pets of this city. Though essentially un-trained in music, both the melodies, lyrics and arrangements offered in this veterinarian’s first-time artistic work represent a truly genuine representation of the great joy (and sometimes sadness) inherent in the context of our special relationship with our animal friends. Dr. Levy continues to lead his band at various benefit shows in New York City and was recently honored by BMI in being offered a year-long position as auditor in their prestigious Musical Theater Workshop program. He is also a recipient of the 2006 Merit Award of the NYC Veterinary Medical Society, The Deans’ Pegasus Award from his Alma Mater, The

Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine, and was a runner-up in a Congressional Fellowship Program. He is presently one of ten veterinarians selected nationally to appear in the American Veterinary Medical Association's 2010 Media Campaign and continues to provide acupuncture treatments and veterinary medical care to his many animal patients through his local housecall practice.

For further information or to contact "Pet-Rox" you may email Dr. Levy at:

www.HouseCallsForYourPet.com

LOST DOG, THE STORY OF LAIKA

A Family Friendly, Pet-centric Musical

Based on the songs of Pet-Rox
Words & Music by veterinarian Dr. Jeffrey Levy

'Lost Dog, The Story of Laika' is inspired by the true tale of Laika, the first dog in space. It intertwines the journeys of modern-day lost dog Hank, his love interest Lily, and Laika as three all try to find their way home.

(*Note: actors will play multiple roles, often as their original character playing another character. All actors' original characters are animals, subsequently the 'humans' in the show will be played by the animals pretending to be human.)

CAST:

GRANDPAW, Great Uncle Crawdaddy, Walter Cronkite
GRANDMUTT, Strelka, Ms. Hen Rietta
GRANDPUP 1 (F), Belka, Lily
GRANDPUP 2 (M), Mad Russian Scientist, Hank
GRANDPUP 3 (F), Sasha, Mom, Mare
GRANDPUP 4 (M), Engineer 1, Dad, Stallion
GRANDPUP 5 (F), Engineer 2, Laika, Suzy
GRANDPUP 6 (M), Reporter, Billy, Sloppy Joe
DEAN-O THE RAT, Red Army One-Star General, Dogcatcher, MC

SCENES:

ACT ONE

OPENING OVERTURE, Dean-O the Rat, before curtain
SCENE 1 - Grandpaw and Grandmutt's doghouse, day
SCENE 2 - Russia, Baikonur Cosmodrome, day, *OUT OF THIS WORLD (LAIKA)*
SCENE 3 - New York City, day, *LOST DOG*
SCENE 4 - New York City Pound/street, night, *RAINING CATS AND DOGS*
SCENE 5 - Baikonur Cosmodrome, Training Center, day,
Manhattan, next morning, *CHICKEN LITTLE*
SCENE 6 - New Orleans/Deep South, church, day, *HEAVEN ON EARTH*
SCENE 7 - New Orleans/Deep South, church, day,
New York City streets, day,
Baikonur Cosmodrome, day, *LAST OF THE BREED*

ACT TWO

SCENE 1 - Pet-Rox Pub, night, *TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY PET*

SCENE 2 - Pet-Rox Pub, night, continued, *RABBIT EARS*

SCENE 3 - Pet-Rox Pub, night, late, *SHOW YOUR TRUE STRIPES*

SCENE 4 - New York City street/Subway, later night

SCENE 5 - Queens, Aqueduct Race Track, next day, *HOLD YOUR HORSES*

SCENE 6 - Nowhere, night, *RABBIT FROM THE HAT*

SCENE 7 - Pet-Rox Pub, day, *SHOW YOUR TRUE STRIPES (Reprise)*

SCENE 8 - Pet-Rox Pub/Doghouse living room, same day.

CURTAIN - *URBAN JUNGLE*

ACT ONE

OPENING OVERTURE - Curtains are closed. Music swells. Stepping out in front of the curtains in ridiculously grand fashion is our narrator, DEAN-O THE RAT, dressed smartly in a tuxedo. He instructs the band to vamp quietly underneath him. Dean-O provides a running comic relief to the events, both tragic and sublime, that will unfold in our "almost true story" (think of 'Donkey' in Shrek). No matter the scene, from 1950's Russia to modern day New York hip-hop, Dean-O dresses and acts accordingly, accents are his specialty. He greets the audience, rather expectantly, as if it's him they've come to see. Dean-O consistently breaks the fourth wall during the show. In a funny bit he tries to warm the audience up for a musical about rats, simply called 'Rats!' Apparently it's the unknown sequel to that *other* Broadway show about felines - the "show that shan't be named". Dean-O is especially adept at engaging the children in the audience, asking them questions and encouraging them to shout back the answers. Alas, his bid to pitch them a show about rats stalls. He gives in, for now. Dean-O cues up the band and properly introduces the musical they came to see, 'LOST DOG, THE LAIKA STORY'. Exit Dean-O.

Music crescendos, the sounds of barking, growling and yipping come from behind the curtain. End *Opening Overture*. Curtain up. Lights up on...

SCENE 1 - Present day. GRANDPAW and GRANDMUTT'S doghouse living room.

Interior of a larger than life doghouse, the living room center stage. Grandmutt is OSL in the kitchen, preparing biscuits for several grandpups. Six (6) boy and girl pups are littered about the living room, engaged in the usual puppy activities: tug of war, doggy puzzles, play-fighting, tracking, and chasing one's tail. DSR is a large, well worn couch, with nips of pulled cushion, and a loose spring or two. Grandmutt's seat in the middle of the couch is marked by several pillows embroidered with pictures of dogs. Dog family portraits adorn the walls. Grandpaw sits USR of the couch in a weathered, hewn rocking chair that migrated with him from the deep South. He gnaws on a rawhide stick while reading the paper. The famous tapestry of dogs playing poker hangs behind him. DSL sits a large, well traveled

wooden trunk. It has an emblem of the old Russian space program, with a blazing star and the name 'Laika' above it.

Grandmutt enters from OSL, the smell of fresh baked biscuits leading the way. The pups circle her like hyenas. Grandpaw eyes them with loving disapproval, as they trip over each other to be the first for a treat. Some of the pups do their best tricks, others try painfully to sit still. Grandmutt has trouble seeing though, which can lead to a variety of physical humor: bumps, mishaps and mistaken identities. She may move slowly but she still manages to run into the coffee table, almost spilling the entire plate of biscuits. The pups, fixated on the swaying biscuit tray, follow it in unison, as if aboard the tilting Titanic. She apologizes to the furniture, mistaking it for one of her grandpups. They giggle. Grandpaw clears his throat in reprimand, the pups lower their heads and wait. He goes back to his paper.

Grandmutt doles out the biscuits in deliberate fashion, calling some of the pups by the wrong name. She even uses one pup's name twice. As the last pup gets his/her biscuit, Dean-O the Rat pops up out of nowhere and slides in line. Grandmutt hands him a biscuit, he and the grandpups exchange knowing winks, she murmurs something about losing track of how many grandpups she's got. There's a chance to do a whole bit here about Grandmutt trying to count them, with the audience's help. Grandpaw knows this game. Without looking up from his paper he declares "I smell a rat." And Dean-O splits, but not without a quick "Yes!" to the audience. Grandpaw, who'll have plenty of asides to the audience, has a charming adversarial relationship with Dean-O, making for lots of great bits, sideways glances, and basic straightman/screwball humor.

It's story time. Grandmutt and Grandpaw set the table for a rousing "tail" of heroism, love, and loss, about some dogs *very close to them*. The grandpups have no idea what's about to come. So off we go into the story of Laika...

SCENE 2 - Day. November 3, 1957, Russia, Mongolian Desert, Baikonur Cosmodrome, Mission Control Room.

The stage transforms into Baikonur Cosmodrome, the mighty Russian Mission Control Room. Grandpaw stays seated DSR, in a half spot light. The grandpups spring into action, pulling costumes out of the trunk and hurrying themselves into place. '*OUT OF THIS WORLD (LAIKA)*' vamps underneath. Sputnik II is being readied for launch. The grandpups have all the enthusiasm of kids playing make-believe yet when they are in the scene they do not comment on it. Strapped in the rocket's capsule, out of sight is little LAIKA.

The pups will play the roles of:
MAD RUSSIAN SCIENTIST
SASHA
BELKA
ENGINEER 1
ENGINEER 2

REPORTER

Grandpaw will play his GREAT UNCLE CRAWDADDY and WALTER CRONKITE

Grandmutt will play STRELKA

Dean-O will play the role of RED ARMY ONE-STAR GENERAL

(*Note: for larger cast add TECHNICIANS 1 and 2, REPORTER 2, and LAIKA'S ADMIRERS.)

The MAD RUSSIAN SCIENTIST, dressed in a white lab coat, propagandizes to the fawning reporter. The control room bustles around him. Laika, mongrel turned cosmonaut, is a national hero, soon to be the first living creature in space. Behind the Mad Russian Scientist cower two other pups, BELKA and STRELKA. Belka strenuously agrees with everything the Mad Russian Scientist says, while Strelka, though submissive, clearly knows better. Strelka and Belka are both dogmonauts-in-training. Pending the success of this mission, they will follow in Laika's paw prints. On either side of the Mad Russian Scientist stand SASHA, Laika's handler, and the RED ARMY ONE-STAR GENERAL, practically shaking with ambition ("I see stars...*five* of them"). He is a snake, a Comedia dell'arte prototype for the children in the audience to boo and hiss at. We should have lots of fun with him.

Lights lower slightly on Mission Control Room. The Mad Russian Scientist mouths his ongoing interview. Everyone else continues to pantomime their actions. Lights up on Grandpaw, as WALTER CRONKITE, interviewing himself as GREAT UNCLE CRAWDADDY. Grandpaw alternates between an ol' coot rocking his chair on a deep Southern porch, and playing America's most trusted newsman. The lights shift accordingly. Cronkite is trying to get a feel for what the common American has to say about the unfolding events. Great Uncle Crawdaddy wonders "what's a Sputnik, anyway?" Cronkite focuses on the spirit of the undertaking and the heroism required in attempting such a dangerous mission. He adds nice touches of detail: 'Laika' means "curly" in Russian, a tribute to the stray dog's locks, and 'Sputnik' means "traveler".

The interview ends. Lights shift back. '*OUT OF THIS WORLD (LAIKA)*' amps up. Countdown to launch, Red Army One-Star General gets audience to help, "10...1...BLAST OFF!" The stage erupts in joy and awe, and for Strelka and Sasha some sadness and fear. This should be as big an opening number as possible.

Overhead video, USC, features classic black and white newsreel images of the cold-war.

The musical bridge includes charming space-age animal Cossack dancers, led by Red Army One-Star General, clinking glasses and cheering "Nastrovia!"

OUT OF THIS WORLD (Laika)

Mad Russian Scientist, Red Army One-Star General, Engineer 1 & 2:

*Up and off into the stratosphere
Without knowing what there was to fear!
Blast-off took her to the greatest heights,
Rocket soaring until out of sight!*

CHORUS:

Sasha, Reporter:

Laika go! Laika go!

Belka, Strelka:

Circle right around this planet!

Sasha, Reporter:

Laika go! Laika go!

Belka, Strelka:

You're the dog who ruled the world!

Sasha, Reporter:

Heaven knows, heaven knows-

Belka, Strelka:

-that they never planned to land it.

Sasha, Belka, Strelka, Reporter:

You're an unsung cosmic canine and the Earth's first astro-girl!

Mad Russian Scientist, Red Army One-Star General, Engineer 1 & 2:

*Helmet, pressure-suit and O-2 mask,
Trained to carry out one simple task,
Transmit data 'bout your vital signs,
We can't worry if you're left behind!*

**CHORUS*

Mad Russian Scientist (spoken):

Nastrovia!

Red Army One-Star General (spoken):

Hey! (x6)

Mad Russian Scientist, Red Army One-Star General, Engineer 1 & 2:

*Teams of creatures followed Laika's flight.
Birds and bugs and so many mice,
Chimps raised only for one special day,
Sent upward bound and so far away!*

**CHORUS*

Red Army One-Star General (spoken):

Hey! (x6)

Mad Russian Scientist, Red Army One-Star General, Engineer 1 & 2:

*One day men may reach the distant stars,
Cosmic travelers reaching wide and far.
They may look back to the centuries past*

And salute the leaders of their space-age pack!

**CHORUS*

Great Uncle Cawdaddy:

*It was one small step, a great leap for mankind,
But it was four paws that they asked to walk the line
With a knick-knack paddy-whack give the dog a bone!
Up in a Sputnik/rocket and never make it home! (x4)*

(Everyone else):

Ooh-ooh-ooh...

Great Uncle Cawdaddy:

*It was one small step - a great leap for mankind,
But it was four paws that they asked to walk the line –
(*Note: Actors get kids from audience to join in with):
With a knick-knack paddy-whack give the dog a bone!
Up in a Sputnik that never came home! (x6)*

(Everyone else):

Ooh-ooh-oooh...

SCENE 3 - Present day. Grandmutt and Grandpaw's living room.

As the pups exit Scene 2 they do not react to having been in the scene but instead play the excitement of having watched it. Dean-O obliviously hums and dances the last number around the living room. He is still dressed as the Red Army One-Star General.

Grandpaw transitions into a modern tale of escape and danger someone about *very close to them*. The grandpups coo with anticipation. *LOST DOG'* siren vamp begins.

HANK is a well kept, rather naive house dog who finds himself on the street after running from a dog fight at the dog park. LILY is a mongrel, tough yet beautiful, and strikingly similar to Strelka and Grandmutt. Dean-O becomes the DOGCATCHER.

Stage splits to reveal Hank & Lily running from the Dogcatcher. Parallel worlds. Staging eventually incorporates both Hank and Lily's path, almost as if they're circling each other. The Dogcatcher chases them both and several other strays, played by the pups. The ensuing chaos of the verses and bridge are comically interrupted. At each chorus everyone one on stage freezes and breaks into the innocent nostalgia of what home life was like, the dogs stepping into the roles of Hank's human family, the Dogcatcher singing right alongside them. It's a dream-sequence feel with a tap dance number. As soon as the chorus is over they pick up right where they left off.

LOST DOG

Hank:

*I slipped away, without a trace. I became another missing face.
A dog-run fight, I just took flight. A victim of a collar not on tight.
I ended in this neighborhood. I fear my situation is not good.
This place is strange! Fleas, bugs and mange! The peril to my life is understood.*

BRIDGE:

Hank (w/back ups):

*Whoa, ho, ho, ho, ho, I am a lost dog who's alone.
Show me the way back to my home.
Don't leave me here in the unknown.
I am a lost dog left to roam and roam.
Where is my home sweet home?*

CHORUS:

Hank:

I remember I was playing in the backyard-

Suzy:

-digging up a bone.

Hank:

I was shredding up the sofa-

Billy:

-in the living room-

Hank:

-until you came home.

Suzy:

Chasing down a squirrel-

Mom:

-in the front yard.

Dad:

Barking at a cat.

Mom:

Panting when excited-

Suzy:

-like a doggie maniac!

Mom:

Crying and a-howling

Dad:

And scratching at the back door

Hank:

Hurry now. Open, please!

Can't you see I gotta pee!

Suzy:

Sniffing on a hydrant and-

Billy:

-lifting up a leg!

Hank:

For a biscuit I'll stand up real tall

Just watch me as I beg

ALL:

Ooh, ooh, ooh

One by one the strays are scooped up. Lily and Hank are the last two caught.

Hank:

A city truck, it picked me up. They put me in a cage right in the back.

A one-eyed cat, someone's pet rat, a rabbit and a pit-bull who's named Jack,

A parakeet, it chirped so sweet, every creature from a city street.

All gathered here, paws clenched in fear, waiting for the end we all would meet!

**BRIDGE*

**CHORUS*

The song ends with a triumphant Dogcatcher.

SCENE 4 - Night. New York City Pound/street.

Tight spots on two cages, holding Hank and Lily. They plan their escape. Chemistry between them. Comic bit foiling the Dogcatcher. Breakout. *'RAINING CATS AND DOGS'* intro. A dark, rainy city night. Things have gone from bad to worse, but they do have each other, and Lily knows the streets. Hank keeps Lily close to him, protecting her from the storm.

Choreograph dog and cat dancers with colorful raincoats, boots and umbrellas ala' 'Singin' In The Rain'. Lightening flashes at musical accents. Dean-O makes random cameos: paddling a kayak across stage, standing in full rain gear fishing, holding a sign that says "the end is near", snorkeling, hanging out his laundry, etc.

RAINING CATS & DOGS

Lily (w/ back ups):

Ooohs...

Hank:

Running, running, with that thunderstorm a-comin', there may be no way out!