

July 10, 2000

Sound Venture Productions Announces Broadcast schedule for "The Toy Castle"

Neil Bregman, President of Sound Venture Productions is pleased to announce the broadcast schedule for their newest, most exciting television series yet. The Toy Castle, a live-action pre-school series will debut on Treehouse TV Monday, September 4th at 8:30 PM with regular weekly airings every Saturday at 7:00 AM, 11:30AM, 4:00PM, 8:30PM, and 1:00AM and every Sunday at 7:30 am 12:00PM, 4:30PM, 9:00PM, and 1:30AM (All times EST).

With its unique blend of dance, music, and mime spun into modern fairytales, the delightful story-telling of The Toy Castle takes a child on a fun-filled journey of discovery and magic, while imparting life lessons in a warm and non-threatening way.

Focus groups were conducted to gauge the series' impact on its target audience: boys and girls aged 2 to 5 years old. The results were as expected: The Toy Castle is a hit with the kids and childcare providers alike. Renowned child psychologist, Margie Golick (Ph.D.) of The Learning Associates was thrilled. "What a great way for pre-schoolers to be introduced to the arts of dance and mime! With the bright colours and lively characters - faces and bodies always in motion - they will clearly hold the attention of the target age group. The dancing characters have some of that larger-than-life charm of the much-loved Teletubbies and Barney."

The Toy Castle's colourful cast of characters includes the Ballerina, Soldier, Clown, China Doll, Sailor, Rag Doll, Strongman, Goblin, Freda and Frederick Frog and the Mice Family, all performed by members of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Each character deals with issues important to little girls and boys: sharing, getting along, being shy, and learning something new, just to name a few. "Each story has a little moral - not too preachy, but showing the characters learning lessons like: there's more fun to be had if you don't always insist on your own way; be brave enough to try something new - you may enjoy it!" observes Ms Golick.

Childcare providers observed the reactions of preschoolers as they watched an episode. Wanda Greer, Early Childhood Educator from Glebe Parents' Daycare enthused, "The children were absolutely mesmerized! Later that afternoon as we were coming down the stairs, several children were saying, 'duck, duck, goose' with each step they took. This is a game played in one of the episodes we watched earlier." Sue Glazer (M.Sc.), Speech Language Pathologist takes the game a step further, "It can also be used as a tool by parents and educators as a jumping-off point for group discussion. Following each episode, these children were happy to retell the story, to describe a character and to perform some of the actions and dance movements."

Judging by the most important critics, the children, the series seems destined to be a hit. "My almost three year old granddaughter was mesmerized. I think this is a winner," says Ms Golick.

The Toy Castle is produced by Sound Venture Productions in association with YTV Canada Inc./Treehouse TV, Saskatchewan Communication Network, TFO (TVOntario) with the participation of the Canadian Television Fund (License Fee Program), the Shaw Television Broadcast Fund, the Shaw Children's Programming Initiative, the Rogers Cable Broadcast Fund and Rogers Telefund. International distribution is handled by Sound Venture International.

Neil Bregman is the Executive Producer, Katherine Jeans is the Director and Producer, Nancy Trites-Botkin is the Executive Story Editor, Mary Kerr is the Production Designer and Timothy Spain is the Choreographer.

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