

Something wicked's in the air!

FLIGHT OF THE MOTHMAN



DIRECTOR PREVIEW PACKET

Heighten Theatricals

BY MATT GLICKSTEIN
& JASON SPRAGGINS

FLIGHT OF THE MOTHMAN

A Musical Mystery

for children and children at heart

MUSIC BY
MATT GLICKSTEIN

BOOK & LYRICS
BY JASON SPRAGGINS

SYNOPSIS

Set in the 1980s at Camp Pleasant Pines, *Flight of the Mothman* follows a group of campers who, as part of the Junior Gumshoe Agency, dive into an epic mystery at their camp. The camp is about to be sold and shut down by the sneaky businessman Mr. Drake, who is accompanied by his assistant, Charlie, but things take an unexpected turn when strange rumors about a creature called the Mothman start to spread. With glowing red eyes and massive wings, the Mothman is said to be a terrifying symbol of doom.

Riley, who's all in on the supernatural, is sure the Mothman is real and can't wait to uncover the truth. Her best friend Casey, on the other hand, is a total skeptic, believing that only science can explain what's going on. As the two friends clash over science vs. imagination, they get caught up in a whirlwind of strange clues and mysterious events at the camp, leading them to question what's really going on—and if the Mothman is involved.

Along the way, the mystery pulls in the rest of the Junior Gumshoe Agency, a team of young detectives eager to crack the case, chase down clues, and earn their next badge. The campers are joined by the quirky adults of Camp Pleasant Pines, including the warm and adventurous Ms. Luna, the nervous but well-meaning Mr. Herron, and the camp's owner, Mr. Schwartz, who is desperate to save the place he loves. Together, they face strange sightings, eerie sounds in the woods, power outages, floods, bugs, and more than a few hilarious moments of panic.

As the camp's future hangs by a thread, the mystery unravels... but the real story is about believing in the unknown, the power of storytelling, and keeping an open mind in a world full of surprises.

With fun, catchy 80s songs throughout, *Flight of the Mothman* mixes comedy and mystery to create an exciting, adventure-filled experience that'll keep you guessing and dancing along.

Quick Facts: Flight of the Mothman

A spooky-fun musical mystery for schools, youth theaters, and community programs

Set in the summer of 1986 at Camp Pleasant Pines, *Flight of the Mothman* follows a group of young detectives in the Junior Gumshoe Agency as they race to solve a strange mystery before their beloved camp is sold and shut down. When rumors spread of a winged creature with glowing red eyes, the campers must decide what to believe—and what it really means to keep an open mind.

Cast Size

18+ performers, plus flexible ensemble

- * 10 main roles
- * 6 supporting roles
- * 2 non-speaking roles
- * Expandable camper ensemble

The show is designed to work for a wide range of program sizes. The ensemble can be expanded to include additional campers, Mothman Shadows, movement groups, or featured moments depending on your cast.

Recommended Performers

Flight of the Mothman works especially well for:

- * Elementary, middle school, and youth theatre performers
- * Mixed-age casts
- * Programs with both experienced and developing performers
- * Large ensembles
- * Camps, schools, community theatres, and children's theatre programs

The show includes featured opportunities for younger performers, preteens/teens, older teens, and adult performers.

Age & Gender Flexibility

The show is highly flexible. All roles may be played by actors of any gender, and pronouns or honorifics may be adjusted to fit your cast.

Camp staff, business characters, and podcast hosts may be played by older teens or adults, while the Junior Gumshoe Agency and Gumshoe Cadets are ideal for kids, preteens, or teens.

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Setting

Camp Pleasant Pines — Summer 1986

A rustic summer camp surrounded by dense woods, full of friendship, campfire stories, mystery, and adventure.

The Marsh

A wild stretch of wetlands beyond the camp where strange clues, eerie sounds, and the legend of the Mothman begin to come alive.

Run Time

Approximately 60–65 minutes

Optional intermission may be added depending on the needs of your production.

Music

11 musical numbers

The score has an energetic 1980s-inspired feel, with full-cast numbers, featured character songs, mystery/suspense moments, and ensemble opportunities throughout.

Your license includes rehearsal tracks, performance tracks, and customizable performance tracks with optional “helper” group background vocals.

Themes

Mystery

Investigation

Teamwork

Friendship

Imagination

Science

Belief vs. skepticism

Cryptids

Storytelling

Keeping an open mind

Production Style

Flight of the Mothman is designed to be easy and flexible to produce. The camp setting can be created with simple scenic pieces such as signs, benches, cabin elements, lanterns, or a central firepit. The marsh can be suggested through lighting, sound, fabric, movement, projections, or minimal set pieces.

Optional theatrical effects may include shadow puppetry, flashlights, silhouettes, glowing red eyes, fog, soundscapes, or actor-driven illusions. Productions may be simple or elaborate depending on the space, budget, and creative vision.

What's Included With the License (\$399)

The license includes a complete digital production package:

- * Actor Script
- * Director's Guide
- * Show Resource Guide
- * Piano/Vocal Rehearsal Book
- * Song lyric book
- * Lyric videos
- * Rehearsal and performance tracks
- * Optional helper-vocal performance tracks
- * Marketing pack with logo, poster, and social graphics
- * Copy License
- * Video Recording License

Licensing

The base license includes two performances. Additional performances may be added for a \$75 per-performance fee.

Productions may print the materials needed for their cast and crew during the licensed production period, and video recording rights are included at no additional cost.

Visit www.heightentheatricals.com to license and for more info or scan this QR code:



CAST OF CHARACTERS

Cast Size: 18+

MAIN (10 Actors)

Members of The Junior Gumshoe Agency (Campers)

RILEY- (Teen/Preteen) New to Camp Pleasant Pines. Obsessed with the unknown and fantastical. Riley "wants to believe". Friendly and a bit naive.

CASEY- (Teen/Preteen) Camper. Member of the Junior Gumshoe Agency (a kid's detective club). Logical and methodical- a natural skeptic. A bit edgy in personality.

TAYLOR- (Teen/Preteen) Founder and President of the Junior Gumshoe Agency.

ALEX- (Teen/Preteen) Another of the Junior Gumshoe Agency's science experts. Specializes in zoology and cryptid research. Balances skepticism with curiosity and open-mindedness.

JORDAN- (Teen/Preteen or Younger) Member of the Junior Gumshoe Agency. A fun-loving jokester, loyal to his team.

Camp Staff

MR. SCHWARTZ- (Adult/Older Teen) Camp Director. Friendly but somewhat aloof/scattered. Grandson of Camp Pleasant Pines' owner.

MRS. LUNA- (Adult/Older Teen) Nature Guide/Camp Counselor. Very proper and put together- the opposite of Mr. Schwartz. Serious and often cryptic with her words.

MR. DRAKE- (Adult/Older Teen) Wealthy Businessman/Investor. An uptight professional with his own selfish plans for Camp Pleasant Pines.

CHARLIE- (Adult/Older Teen) Mr. Drake's Bumbling Assistant - Clumsy and easily frightened. Often a source of comic relief, unintentionally.

MR. HERRON- (Adult/Older Teen) Grounds Keeper. Quiet and watchful. Often a mysterious figure of suspicion and questionable motives as events unfold.

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SUPPORTING (6 Actors)

Gumshoe Cadets- 4 total (members- in-training) (speaking & singing)

(Preteens or Younger)

JAMIE
BAILEY
PARKER
DREW

Adult Voices (staged, off-stage, or pre-recorded- at director's discretion)

ADULT PODCAST HOST ("The Seeker") (non-singing) Adult co-host of *Beyond Belief*. Same gender as Riley- to draw parallels between the present-day host and the character from the 1980s.

ADULT PODCAST HOST ("The Skeptic") (non-singing) Adult co-host of *Beyond Belief*. Same gender as Casey- to draw parallels between the present-day host and the character from the 1980s.

ENSEMBLE (2+ Actors/Flexible)

NON- SPEAKING)

MOTHMAN- (non-singing) The elusive, winged creature at the center of the mystery. The Mothman appears in three iterations: a shadow puppet, costumed, and in his "true form". More info can be found in the script (to avoid spoilers).

YOUNG BOY (non- singing)- A curious kid and avid listener of the paranormal podcast *Beyond Belief*. His role, though minor, bridges the modern day with the past.

CAMPERS- (singing) Students visiting Camp Pleasant Pines Summer Camp 1986.

**All characters may be portrayed by actors of any gender, and pronouns/honorifics in the script can be adjusted to reflect the performers' identities.*

Performance Track List

Track	Song Title	Characters
1	Camp Pleasant Pines	Schwartz, Luna, Herron, Ensemble
2	Camp Pleasant Pines Reprise #1	Schwartz, Luna, Drake, Charlie
3	The Legend of the Mothman	Schwartz, Luna, Gumshoes, Mothman
4	Something Wicked!	Gumshoes, Drake, Charlie, Luna, Ensemble
5	I Want to Believe	Riley, Casey
6	The Investigation	Gumshoes, Drake, Luna, Mothman
7	Seeing is Believing	Drake, Charlie, Gumshoes, Luna, Ensemble, Mothman
8	More Than Meets the Eye	Riley, Casey, Alex
9	Stranger Than Fiction	Gumshoes, Schwartz, Luna, Drake
10	Camp Pleasant Pines Reprise #2	Drake, Charlie
11	The Stories That We Tell	Full cast

Flight of the Mothman Production Requirements

Flight of the Mothman was written to be flexible, imaginative, and achievable for schools, youth theaters, and community programs of many sizes. The show can be staged with a full scenic build, a simple unit set, projections, or actor-driven theatrical effects. The most important production goal is not realism, but clarity, atmosphere, and a strong sense of adventure.

Sets

The story takes place primarily in two connected worlds: Camp Pleasant Pines and the Marsh. Productions should create a clear visual distinction between these spaces.

Camp Pleasant Pines should feel warm, structured, safe, and familiar. Suggested elements include camp signage, benches or picnic tables, lanterns, cabin facades, wood textures, rope details, and a central campfire area.

The Marsh should feel mysterious, unpredictable, and slightly unsettling. Suggested elements include reeds, vines, rocks, layered fabric, shadowy lighting, fog or haze effects, and irregular pathways.

The set does not need to be large or complicated. Some productions may show both locations at once, while others may rotate scenic pieces, use lighting changes, projections, fabric, or actor movement to transform the space. The key is that the audience understands when characters are at camp, when they are entering the marsh, and why crossing between those worlds matters.

Important scenic moments include a central storytelling/campfire area, space for investigation scenes, movement between camp and marsh, and a final Mothman reveal that ideally feels as if the creature appears from beyond or above the visible world of the set.

Flexible Staging Spaces

The show can work in a traditional theatre, gymnasium, black box, classroom, cafeteria, community hall, or other flexible space. Larger productions may build a fixed world with camp and marsh areas existing simultaneously. Smaller productions may use entrances, aisles, hallways, projections, rotating set pieces, or simple fabric and lighting changes to suggest multiple locations.

Directors are encouraged to let their space inspire the design. The world of the show should be built with imagination first and construction second.

Costumes

Costumes should capture the adventurous spirit of a 1980s summer camp mystery. They can be simple, colorful, and comfortable for young performers.

Campers may wear Camp Pleasant Pines T-shirts with athletic shorts or casual camp wear. 1980s-inspired accessories such as scrunchies, bandanas, leg warmers, wristbands, fanny packs, friendship bracelets, and bright color accents can help create the period style.

The Junior Gumshoe Agency should stand out through personality-specific details: detective gear, safari/explorer pieces, pocket dictionaries, fanny packs, magnifying glasses, sashes, badges, or other playful mystery-solving accessories.

Camp staff costumes should suggest practical outdoor leadership: khakis, vests, hats, boots, polos, camp shirts, or overalls. Mr. Drake and Charlie may contrast the camp world with suits, silk pajamas, sunglasses, an old-style cell phone, or other exaggerated business/comedy elements.

The Mothman may be created simply or elaborately. A real Mothman costume can use a black base layer, wings, fur or feather textures, claw gloves, a headpiece, and red LED eyes. The Mr. Schwartz disguise version may intentionally look more homemade, theatrical, and slightly comedic.

Props

Props should be visible, durable, functional, and introduced early in rehearsal whenever possible. Essential props include:

- * Headphones and phone for the podcast framing device
- * Mrs. Luna's shovel
- * Mr. Herron's megaphone
- * The mysterious kite with red LEDs and "S.O.S."
- * Flashlights for marsh exploration
- * Bug bait
- * Net for the Gumshoe Cadets

Optional or adaptable props include a bell, clock or time indicator, shadow puppets, projection elements, investigation notebooks, camping gear, fly swatters, or other creative additions that support the world of the show.

Lighting

Lighting can be simple, but it should be intentional. Warm ambers and soft whites help establish the safety and energy of Camp Pleasant Pines, while cooler blues, greens, shadows, and lower light can suggest the mystery of the marsh.

Flashlights are especially useful because they motivate light naturally within the story and create suspenseful movement and shadows. Darkness can also be used effectively to conceal the Mothman, allowing red LED eyes or silhouettes to create a stronger effect than a bright spotlight.

Sound

Sound design is an important tool for atmosphere. Wind, insects, water, thunder, distant cries, and transition cues can make the world feel larger without adding physical scenery.

Productions may use recorded sound effects, live practical effects, or a combination of both. Simple theatrical sound-making—such as cellophane for fire, metal for thunder, drums for suspense, or a unique cry for the Mothman—can add a fun, handmade mystery-adventure quality.

Overall Production Approach

Flight of the Mothman does not require an elaborate set or expensive technical equipment. It works best when directors focus on clear storytelling, creative atmosphere, and student-friendly theatrical imagination. Whether staged with a full scenic design or a few transforming pieces, the audience should feel the safety of Camp Pleasant Pines, the mystery of the Marsh, and the excitement of discovering what may be lurking just beyond the trees.

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THE MOTHMAN LEGEND

The first reported real-life sighting of the creature that would come to be known as the Mothman occurred on November 15, 1966, in Point Pleasant, West Virginia (the inspiration for "Camp Pleasant Pines" in our musical). The couple who claimed the sighting described the creature as a large man-bird with glowing red eyes. The next day, the town's newspaper ran the headline: "*Couples See Man-Sized Bird... Creature... Something.*" The national press soon ran with the story, and the account of the "Mothman" spread across the world. Skeptics of the sighting believed the Mothman to have actually been a Sandhill Crane or Giant Blue Heron (hence the name of our red herring character: Mr. Herron). Nonetheless, sightings continued and have done so for decades.

Through the years, the Mothman has allegedly been sighted across the globe—often near disaster sites: bridge collapses, the Chernobyl meltdown, and even the World Trade Centers on 9/11. This has led to the cryptid being considered a harbinger of doom. However, some see it as a sentinel, silently watching over those in distress. Perception plays a significant role in how the Mothman is viewed, and perception plays an important role in our fictional story, with vision, lighting, and personal biases being recurring references.

The Mothman, real or not, is certainly a powerful symbol that inspires wonder and consideration of the unknown. We found it particularly fascinating that it is a flying cryptid. The skies have captured the public's imagination for centuries and remain a vast, mysterious frontier. In recent times, the news has been flooded with reports of UFO sightings by the military and unexplained, rampant drone activity over many states. Our musical plays on the "sky/flying" theme with character names like Mrs. Luna, Mr. Herron, and even Mr. Drake (Drake being another name for a duck).

The Mothman remains a relevant piece of lore that encourages us to contemplate the mysteries of our world with an open mind and to consider the limitless power of legends to invoke and inspire new perspectives.

Point Pleasant, West Virginia, continues celebrating the infamous cryptid with an annual Mothman Festival. Downtown, a large statue of the Mothman stands silent, perpetual watch.

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Statue of the Mothman in Point Pleasant, West Virginia

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Questions? Contact Heighten Theatricals at
heightentheatricals@gmail.com