

March 14, 1978

VIVA LINNAEUS!

by Sarah Elliott, Marie Longyear and Joseph DiCostanzo



Music by Sarah Elliott

Arranged by Jay Solar and Pat Pelissié

Costumes by Jane Plunkett Directed by Sarah Elliott

A musical entertainment based on the life of Linnaeus who died 200 years ago this year, and produced to celebrate 100 years of the Linnaean Society of New York.

Our special thanks to the Swedish Consulate of New York whose financial assistance made this program possible.

THE CAST

Linnaeus	Max Larson,
First witch	Betty Ann Shor
Second witch	Berry Baker
Third witch	Jean Blair
The birders	Berry Baker
	Jean Blair
	Sarah Elliott
	Richard Sichel
	Mary Yrizarry
	Richard ZainEldeen
President	Helen Hays
Dr, G. Immer	Robert Baines
Field notes	Berry Baker
	Joseph DiCostanzo
	Robert Smart
	John Yrizarry
Writer	Sarah Elliott
Chorus	Julie Abramson
	Berry Baker
	Sarah Elliott
	Max Larson
	Richard ZainEldeen

Scene 1: Linnaeus meets the witches,

Witch Song

I'm Johanne Pedersdotter, wife of Simon Schee
Gather 'round and you will learn just what happened to me,
The year was 1622 and Norway was the place
Where men of God declared that I should leave the bu.an race,
They claimed I was a wicked witch fit for the Devil's den
All I could hear was Jorgen cryl my boy was only ten,
They piled up kindling logs on high and placed me in the midst;
They watched me burn and then they threw my ashes in a ditch,

Words and music by Sarah Elliott

Song of Linnaeus

I was born in Småland, Sweden
I plucked the flowers while playing in this Eden
And studied nature with each passing season
A curious child was I.
Sent to school to be a preacher I was the bane of every teacher
Though poor at books I don't deny I taught the world to classify.

At Lund and Uppsala. I tried to study
Medicine; I found the subject bloody
Preferring to poke about in gardens muddy
A wayward youth was I.
I wrote and talked of botany
And studied plants unceasingly
For wealth and fame I longed to try
To teach the world to classify.

At twenty-five I travelled north to Lapland
Through forest, marsh and rivers I all unmapped land
To watch the midnight sun from Alps was that grand
An awe-struck traveler I.
The birds and plants in bright profusion
I organized without confusion
And through my journals I did try
To teach the world to classify.

I went to Holland my degree to seek
And won my M.D. in just one week
Published papers in a red-hot streak
A regular whirlwind I.
Became the guest of famous men
My sweetheart said, "Come home again!"
I'll no longer sit and sigh
My status you must classify.

I commenced to practice medicine
My clients rich were mostly sick from sin
I cured them of the marks of lust and gin
A wealthy doctor I.
Physician to the Admiralty

I formed a Science Academy
As president I vowed to try
To teach the world to classify.

I longed to join the university
A post fell vacant, simply made for me
Denounced by colleagues out of jealousy
A battling scholar I.
Their antics they would not keep quiet
The king soon heard the student riot
By royal decree appointed, aye,
And taught them all to classify.

Words and music by Sarah Elliott

Scene 2: Central Park Ramble (see Linnaean play, 1978)

Skit ideas by David Robert Baden, Berry Baker, Jean Blair, Sarah Elliott Susan McCarn and Mary Yrizarry.

Scene 3: The Linnaean meeting,

Skit ideas by Marie Longyear, Joseph DiCostanzo and written by Sarah Elliott.

Slides by David Brandt, Joseph Costa, Thomas Davis, Paul Meyer and Arthur Swager.

Graphs by Joseph DiCostanzo, Sarah Elliott and Paul Meyer.

Scene 4: In the field.

Field Trip Song

Oh, it's up at dawn
With our ponchos on —
There isn't any weather that can stop this bunch,
In our waterproof boots
And our neoprene suits.
And there won't be any breakfast till it's time for lunch.

Refrain (last line varies with each repetition)
So come along friends,
Bring your telephoto lens,
And we'll all go in search of Carolina Wrens.

Not a bird will be missed,
We must add it to our list,
And we'll all be better birders when the field trip ends!

Every puddle, every dump,
Every bush and every clump
Is the object of our most intensive scru-ti-ny.
From the morning to the eve
We must search for ruff or reeve
And if we cannot find one, there'll be mu-t1-ny.

Refrain: So come along, etc.
And we'll all be rather touchy when the field trip ends!

Accidentals and endemics
Engage us in polemics:
Is it sub adult or female? Does an eye stripe show?
Is it hybrid, is it morph?
Do we dare to check it off?
Never mind, put it down, and pretend you know.

Refrain: So come along, etc.
And we'll all have longer life lists when the field trip ends.

Refrain: So come along, etc.
And we'll all be exhausted when the field trip ends.

Words by Marie Longyear Music by Sarah Elliott

Scene 5: Linnaeus makes a scene.

Written by Sarah Elliott (after consultation with Eugene Eisenmann).

Linnaeus, Linnaeus, we honor you today,
We call you Linnaeus but never van Liné
Linnaeus, Linnaeus, if you could only see us
We've served you for 100 years in our own way

Words by Sarah Elliott and Marie Longyear
Music by Sarah Elliott