



COSMIC CRITTERS

Created by Crystal Skillman & Bobby Cronin

“The Secret Life of Pets” meets “Star Trek”. An geeky, adventurous young tortoise and her all animal crew blast off from NASA to save the galaxy in this animated musical television series. A YA anime series (12+)

A GIANT LEAP FOR ANIMALKIND

Why is your cat pawing at your heels in the middle of the night?
 Why is that monkey at the zoo mimicking your expression?
 Why is your neighbor’s dog barking at the swaying trees at one in the morning?!

Who doesn’t wonder what goes through the mind of animals?

And what if they dream of going to the stars?

Right now throughout the world, all ages are dreaming of finding new homes to live in beyond earth - from NASA, to billionaires, to William Shatner himself blasting off into the “new frontier”. But what if those dreaming about exploring the “big sky” aren’t just humans?

What if there is a whole world at work that animalkind has created ... a world unknown to humans ... that doesn’t just affect our life here on on Earth... but among the stars? What if these critters are the hope for *all* animalkind? And what if the fate of all creatures depended on a geeky, young tortoise named Tina?

As a writing team we are both animal lovers and activists. Composer Bobby Cronin has worked as a veterinarian assistant, and writer Crystal Skillman has helped assist animal rescue groups. With Cosmic Critters we began to explore writing a musical animated show that asks what kind of animal aliens might be out there waiting for us? Can humans appreciate animalkind in a new way? How can we explore this new frontier but also find a solution for saving our own planet? And what can happen when our earth critters meet up with some extraordinary extraterrestrials?





SERIES OVERVIEW

Through the wide eyes of Tina, a twelve year old tortoise and animal astronaut, we are brought on a journey that is from the point of view of the critters themselves exploring the universe.

After being captured by NASA to be used to test their new space program, Tina discovers that the animal kingdom is already at work on trying to reach extraterrestrial critters who they believe have the keys to finding a new, habitable planet.

Each episode finds Tina torn between her mission to find a new home for animalkind, and the missions in space she and the Critters pursue trying to make peace between all the different animal aliens ... and one particular one bent on vengeance ... who happens to be another twelve year old!

Tina's best friend is Alan. He is the voice of logic who challenges her command, but is also her greatest confidant.

On their intergalactic adventures, Tina and her friends are tasked with missions that mirror the question of family, home, competition, and pursuit of power that she faced on earth, but now she is a captain, and she must get her friends to work together as a crew.

The extraterrestrials Tina meets both guide her yet pose as obstacles to the crew and their mission. All the while, human kind is racing forward to colonize new planets as quickly as possible. And, true to today, we're in a whole new kind of space race... only this one finds extraterrestrials are a huge part of the puzzle of our earth animals finding a new home... if our critters can ever get there!

MEET OUR CHARACTERS

The Critters Crew

Tina (Female, twelve, tortoise) is an eternal optimist driven by a sense of adventure. A whiz at creating clever inventions, Tina "reads" history books given to her by the kind Lab Assistant, and ultimately becomes Captain of the Cosmic Critters rocket. But as Tina discovers, patrolling the galaxy, and keeping her crew out of trouble, is hard! Can she be a hero *and* save the galaxy *and* be there for her friends? Tina can be "hard-shelled" and plow ahead as a captain without checking in with her crew. Her arc is to be able to not just lead in a team, but be a part of a team.

Alan [IX] (Male, teens, monkey) is an eternal skeptic driven by pure logic. He is Tina's best friend. As a neurotic monkey, Alan may be ruled by fears, but he admires Tina's bravery and often surprises her with his unexpected courageous outbursts. Alan is a cautious planner, calculating every move. But for all that "looking before he leaps", he is super clumsy. From growing up on his island, Alan has a good sense of herbs and plants which he uses to help the crew. His energy is an animated "Bones" from Star Trek meets Max (Secret Lives of Pets). He becomes Chef Medical Officer.

Ham (Male, Middle-Aged Chimp) Queer and philosophical Ham has seen it all! He is Tina's mentor, but also finds himself being taught as Tina teaches him to trust himself and engage with his forgotten animal instincts. Ham has only known being kept in a cage in the circus or in the lab, so this new frontier of space is actually is true freedom for him! The true philosopher of the group, he literally cannot function without the liquid courage all intellectuals - espresso. "Spock" meet John Waters.



The Fruit Loops (Gender Fluid, twenty nine days old [and never a day older since they went into space!], fruit flies) Giggly, these mischief makers love to sing in harmony as they tease Tina, which ends up egging her on. These flighty fruit flies operate as the entertainment of the ship as a pop singing group, and also have a keen ear for communicating sonically (like dolphins) on the same frequency of the new lifeforms they encounter.

Lois (Female, one year old, spider) The ballsy, fast-paced spider who operates as the newsroom of the lab. After all, she has eight arms and can report faster than a speeding bullet! She becomes the embedded journalist noting the accomplishment of the crew ...and their blunders! She loves a good gossip "Cheers and Jeers" column, and loves *her* name in all the papers!

Ginny the Guinea (Female, late twenties in human years) The Mid-Western mom of a ton of Guiana baby pigs. Ginny steadfastly cheers on Tina's dreams and aspirations, but like any "show mom", Ginny can get carried away. She is also dedicated to female parity in space. As part of the crew, she becomes the school teacher on the ship and head of the Critters Junior Explorers troupe. She LOVES putting on intergalactic space musicals. I mean who doesn't love "Cats" in space?!

Peppy Pig (Male, ten in pig years) is the ambassador of the group. Refined with an expertise in Pig-Latin, Peppy the Pig considers himself very learned. He is a vegan and a gourmet chef that takes over the cosmic critters' ship kitchen. He ends up translating the Mice's instructions for their rocket, and is able to speak and pick up on other Critters' languages very easily. Unfortunately in terms of translating them correctly, Peppy's "golden tongue" gets tongue-tied in ways that end up creating more confusion. Oopsay!

Roger Raccoon (Male, teens) can take anything apart and loves to boast that he can fix stuff, but gets distracted easily. Half Scotty from Star Trek of the group and half frat boy, he keeps adding

onto the ship useless, “fun” items like a ping pong room or space hammocks. Has a soft spot for hot dogs, to the dismay of Peppy.

Jewel (Female, one year, Guinea Pig) our Junior Explorer and an overzealous Gen-Z-er in the animal world. Tina has a soft spot for this little guinea pig as she sees herself in her. Jewel loves games, problem solving, and stows away on secret missions! As bold as she is, she’s also shy, and rarely speaks. She’s a real introvert/extrovert.

“Coach” Commander Bullfrog (Male, elder) A stern “Patton” type, but has a big heart. Always trying so hard to get his crew to “leap” into shape but they are after all ... rats. He becomes Chief of Operations, maintaining security of the crew. His expertise comes into play when they are under attack or seeking negotiations with other cosmic critters, though unfortunately he has a froggy way of jumping to conclusions.

Lab Rats (Gender Fluid, all ages) who only speak in short one word sentences and race in their wheels. The rats loyally follow Coach Commander Bullfrog as the repair crew of the ship, using their long tails as wrenches and screwdrivers for repairs. Our rats may only have cheese on their tiny brains, and have trouble thinking for themselves, but my they’re strong!

Mack the Mouse (Male, middle aged in mice years) Total hutzpah, old school Italian, born in Brooklyn. Leader of the animal’s version of Mission Control in Houston. The mice are a part of the League of Rodents, which includes bats and squirrels who we meet as the series goes on.

Note: Once in space, our critters never grow older, so season to season they remain the same age.

Cosmic Critters - Extraterrestrial Animal Aliens

Xui (Age unknown) a gray Kola-like creature, has the power of mixing science with the mystical power of what he’s learned from studying intergalactic critters across galaxies making him a renowned warrior. He can see into the future, and shares that Tina’s journey to meet the ancients can only happen if she chooses the correct space path. A strong critter warrior, who helps train Tina and her crew to protect themselves, Xui is also a trickster. It’s hard to know if he is helping Tina, or hindering her. One of the three leaders of the International League of Cosmic Critters.

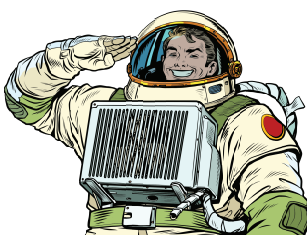
Dot (Age unknown) is a white, small, ephemeral floating arctic fox-like creature. She can see into the past, and shares that Tina’s mother and father, who Tina never knew, have visited the Ancients in the past. Warm and motherly, Dot teaches Tina how to use the resources of the planets. One of the three leaders of the International League of Cosmic Critters.

Treemous (Age unknown) is a dark blue huge sloth-like entity. He is mighty but silent, and only speaks when he has something to say. He can unearth the power of the present. In charge of the hall of records. Stern and serious, he helps Tina and her crew know intimate details of the species they will meet. One of the three leaders of the International League of Cosmic Critters.

Cercia (Female, twelve - the same age as Tina) is the leader of the Purlons. Whatever planet she has visited, the inhabitants seem to have disappeared. A violent force, a Purlon's appearance is strikingly beautiful and elegant. They have a purple tiger-like quality to them with a back of sharp, throwable quills (that can be quite deadly!). Cercia has learned the art of mind control, and also has the power to make herself invisible. She feels pressured to live up to her family's name, and her mother's villainous plans.

Twees, little bird like creatures that seem to populate most planets. They pop up everywhere! They are forever on the hunt for space worms.

The Ancients, a rumored group of space tortoises who began communicating with earth. Tina believes this is the larger family she is meant to make contact with.



Humans - Eternally Annoying and Clueless!

All humans speak gibberish in our show (as that's how our critters hear human speech!)

The Lab Assistant, (Male, twenties). We met him in the lab in the pilot. In later seasons, the Assistant actually tries to learn how to communicate with the animals and the cosmic critters and assist the mice in their mission control headquarters.

Bucks, (Male, teens) a millionaire's pimply kid with his own space jet. Whenever he shows up he ends up usually ruining everything. An unwitting pawn of Cercia in season one.



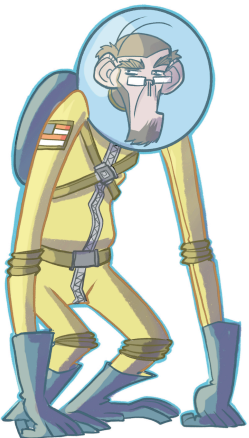
PILOT SUMMARY

Light captures drawings of ancient animal aliens on the walls of a cave. Grandpa Tortoise tells young Tina and her brother that these Cosmic Critters will one day lead animalkind to a safe, new home in “the big sky”. Her brother scoffs at this legend, but Tina believes. Suddenly the cave shakes. A rocket takes off into the sky - our tortoises have migrated right outside NASA! Tina runs out - discovering military personnel in a jeep outside. Tina is captured by the humans.

Several years later. NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. Inside the military training complex, is a testing lab where animals live in cages, including Tina (now 12). Today is “Training Day” and Tina meets it with zest. She’s made her own alarm clock to get up early and prepare. She is gonna get picked this time to go up to the “big sky” - she knows it!

But this time, young Tina finds her next door neighbor in the lab is a newcomer, Alan [with an IX tacked onto his cage label], a monkey who wants nothing at all to do with the space program. Lois, the resident spider who picks their cages’ locks when the humans are gone, lets them out and Tina bounds out. She is going to show Alan, all the critters in the lab, and every human astronaut in her song just **“How to be a Hero”**.

Tina and Alan both get selected to train! But only one will be picked to go up. These competitors plunge into underwater space walks and zero gravity tests. As Tina pits herself against Alan ... she’s realizes she’s winning! She’s got this! But when she twists her leg by accident, Alan is chosen. While being treated in medical, Tina discovers the real purpose of sending animals back into space... the humans are preparing for ways to colonize other planets.



True to the beginning of the space program, most of the animals sent up don’t return. That’s what happened to the first eight Alans! But why? Tina believes she can help Alan make it back safely. Alan, despite his fears, offers to help her on her mission, and together they form a plan to communicate while he’s in space. Tina gives Alan a black stone that she believes is extraterrestrial as good luck.

But when Alan rockets up and Tina loses contact with Alan, Tina loses all hope ... UNTIL out from a small hole in the wall pops out - Mack the Mouse who is tracking Alan’s journey from their central command in the walls of the lab! But Mack knows Alan’s in deep trouble too. Tina despairs, until the mice show her

They have BUILT THEIR OWN ROCKET and they need Tina to pilot it alongside her critters crew.

SEASON ONE OVERVIEW

After our pilot, Tina attempts to lead her critters in a daring escape from the lab and get the rocket that the mice have built off the ground. (For all the craftsmanship, no one has yet flown it of course!)

Meanwhile, Alan wakes up. He's upside down in his crashed spaceship! He's crashed on a bizarre planet filled with green one eyed bird-like creatures. He flips through his planetary guide but this planet is nothing like our solar system. But he notices several flags with the face of a strange looking purple female creature (Cercia) all over the planet ...

At the same time, Tina discovers WHY the humans are sending up animals in space again. They are sending them into a fixed portal (or "Stargate"). It's a gateway to a wormhole that sends animals into other galaxies! Animals are being sent up as literal "guinea pigs" to explore if these wormholes are safe for human travel. Tina has no idea where she'll end up once they send her up that porthole but turns out her own critters crew has some tricks up their sleeve.... And they make it through... into an asteroid field!

It's little Jewel who is able to guide them through - apparently it's just like the video games she's seen the Assistant play in the lab! But right after they get to this "next level", our team realizes they are running out of fuel and fast when they suddenly encounter an object looming over them ... it's an international space station! Ham is barely able to dock their ship, but he gets a "bang up" job done, that Roger Raccoon groans about having to fix it. Once there, our crew encounters a cross-section of the cosmic critters in this solar system.

From critters with sixteen legs and fifty eyes sporting snake-like hair styles to floating bubble pufferfishes, each critter comes from a different galaxy. Here animal aliens dock to refresh themselves, refuel, or replenish their bodily fluids (ewww!), and bring any grievances or problems to Xui, Dot, and Treemous. They are the leaders of the the station and they have asked to meet with Tina as our crew checks out the station: Ginny and her guinea pigs take in the local musical ("Stars are Ours!"), Peppy challenges the five armed chef of the five-star restaurant, and Coach Bullfrog might just have met the frog girl of his dreams and leaps after her.

When Tina enters the meeting room to meet with the Leaders, there is a surprise waiting for her! It's Alan! He was picked up by a cosmic cruiser, but he has also shed light on a larger mystery....which is why the Leaders have asked Tina here.

Xui reveals that several inhabitants of planets have vanished, leaving the planets empty ... where have they gone? And who is doing this? Tina tries to refuse the mission - her crew has coordinates from the mice - which can led to the Ancients. Tina's goal is to find a safe home for the animals back on earth and she believes the Ancients are the ones who can help her. But when Dot reveals just how many planets have been taken over by this villainous force in so many galaxies ... it looks like earth is also in jeopardy!

WHO could be doing this? And why?

Space. Several years earlier. A mysterious cave's drawings are illuminated, but it's the opposite of the story Tina's grandfather told in our pilot. Told in a raspy voice, the story spun is of terrible, greedy earth creatures who live under the rule of man and are his lapdogs, and pets! According to this extraterrestrial legend, all earth critters are corrupted by man.

This raspy voice is revealed to be from a withered and angry alien - a Purlon. A creature elegant and sleek, a purple and black striped tiger crossed with a porcupine with sharp black quills adorning her back. She is talking to her daughter ... young Cercia (five years old) another Purlon who takes in this story. Her mother tells her the Purlons are destined to be in charge of this chaotic universe, and to *never* let anyone get in their way. Not even the Ancients (those tortoise like figures) who they see as a threat.

This elder hands Cercia a black stone with a swirl on it... *the same kind of stone Tina gave to Alan* and now we see clearly the face of this animal alien daughter ... it's the same face from Tina's dream in the pilot ... it's the same face on all those flags on the planet Alan crashed on ...!

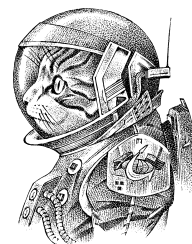
In the present, in her ship, Cercia holds this stone ... now jarred from her memory, she suits up and prepares to leave... but for what purpose?

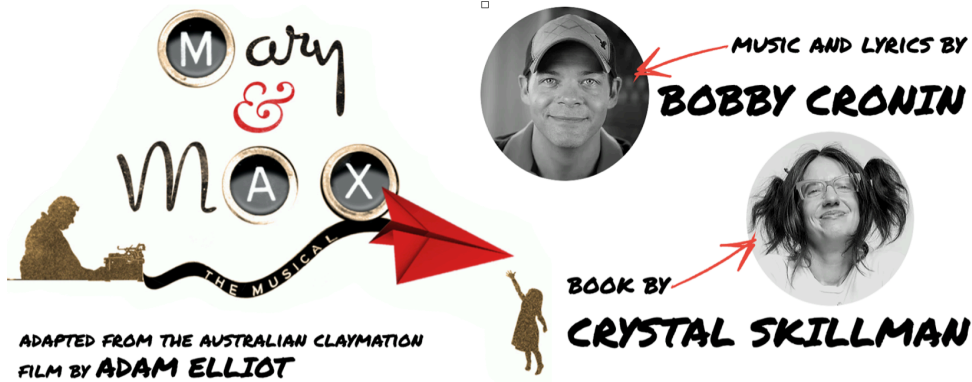
Meanwhile, Tina begins to piece together the clues to find Cercia - she must be clever and inventive, especially as more planets are in jeopardy. From using the fruit flies ability to call sonically to the Twees to help aid in getting rid of Bucks (the pesky millionaire teen on their trail to capture them), to a daring escape from a battle of Purlon troops with space bats leading the way, Tina struggles to keep her crew together. But when Tina notices that Alan is acting strangely, she wonders ... did he have an encounter with Cercia? And did it change her best friend? Is the greatest danger to her crew on her very ship?

Leading up to our season finale, Tina discovers the secret of the black stone. It's an extraterrestrial metal that can be used like a knife to create new portals (more stargates!) to travel to distant galaxies, but only when used in in the right spot at the right time. Tina must choose if she will use it to finally reach the Ancients she has been seeking, find a cure to help Alan, or to find a way to stop Cercia...

OTHER STORYLINES INCLUDE:

- Tina and her crew must win a literal space race between an obnoxious French cat leading other earth animals sent up from international space programs!
- Peppy opens his own space "grub-hub" with Jewel
- Coach Bullfrog and Roger are stranded on a desert like "Survivor" reality show planet
- Tina is reunited with her grandfather, and learns the secret of her parents past
- Lois finds love with a moody Beatles like artist who is well, a space beetle
- The Fruit Loops become a singing group sensation when Ginny becomes their manager
- Pets must be liberated from an oppressive planet - only these pets are miniature humans!





WRITING TEAM

Crystal Skillman (Screenwriter) is an award winning playwright who has written for Marvel and “Adventure Time” comics. She is the co-creator of the original comic book series Eat Fighter (WebToon Studios), and her new audio drama series THE MAGICIAN'S MAGICIAN (TMM) is currently in development with BOOM Integrated, selected for this year’s Orchard Project Audio Lab, and Gotham (formally IFP)’s Market.

Bobby Cronin (Composer) is an award winning musical theater composer who has composed numerous award-winning scores and songs for musical short films, which have headlined festivals all over the world. This fall his new song debuted on Broadway Record’s Rainbow Lullaby album featuring Broadway’s Jelani Remy (“Ain’t Too Proud”), and his work was recently celebrated at The Green Room in NYC sung by a star studded cast including Telly Leung (“Aladdin”, “Glee”), and Kate Rockwell (“Mean Girls”).

Skillman and Cronin’s work is currently featured on the Broadway Podcast Network in the popular audio drama series KING KIRBY about the life of Jack Kirby, co-creator of the Marvel Universe, featuring Steven Rattazzi (“The Venture Bros.”). They are the writers of MARY AND MAX the musical, based on the animated film by Adam Elliot, just optioned by Broadway producers. Their work has often been described as a “children’s show for adults” or “Pixar-like”.

Their new piece RAIN AND ZOE SAVE THE WORLD, a YA tale on stage about two teenage climate change activists on a motorcycle cross country journey, will be announced for a premiere in London next year.

Cosmic Critters character concept art by **Fernando Pinto** (Eat Fighter/WebToon, Fraggle Rock, TMNT).

