



**DEPARTMENT  
OF DRAMA**  
**S** Syracuse University  
College of Visual  
& Performing Arts

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NOVEMBER 13, 2023

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## **'A Christmas Carol' returns to Syracuse Stage, reimagined as a music-filled celebration featuring the magical 2 Ring Circus**

*The all-new production marks the 9<sup>th</sup> time Stage has mounted Charles Dickens' classic*



**Syracuse, New York** — [Syracuse Stage](https://www.syracusestage.com), in association with the Syracuse University Department of Drama, continues Stage's 50th Anniversary season – and the tradition of heart-warming, family-friendly holiday shows – with “A Christmas Carol,” the classic novel by Charles Dickens, here adapted by Richard Helsen, with music by David de Berry, and orchestrations by Gregg Coffin. The production runs Nov. 24 - Dec. 31 in the Archbold Theatre at Syracuse Stage, 820 E. Genesee St., Syracuse.

Melissa Rain Anderson, who dazzled audiences last season with “Disney’s The Little Mermaid,” returns to direct this co-production of “A Christmas Carol,” along with music director Brian Cimmet, choreographer Andrea Leigh-Smith and New York City based 2 Ring Circus, together taking this timeless tale to new heights.

“This is absolutely my favorite adaptation of ‘A Christmas Carol,’” said Anderson. “There is so much heart and joy woven into this classic holiday ghost story, and 2 Ring Circus’ work blends seamlessly into the production, using historic Victorian clowns and acrobatic lamplighters, as well as phantoms and ghosts that fly above the action and above the audience.”

Featuring a cast of over three dozen performers, “A Christmas Carol” joins seasoned pros from across the country with students from the Syracuse University Department of Drama and local young actors making their Syracuse Stage debuts in a music-filled spectacle that charts Ebenezer Scrooge’s soul-searching holiday sojourn, with help from a host of otherworldly spirits.

The production team, many returning from last year’s “Disney’s The Little Mermaid,” includes Kimberly Powers (scenic design), David Kay Mickelsen (costume design), Lonnie Rafael Alcaraz (lighting design), Jacqueline R. Herter (sound design), Ryan Moller (wig design) and Blake Segal (dialect coach).

Anderson added: “Kim Powers’ scenic design allows the audience inside our magical world with steps leading out into the aisles, giving an immersive feel to the evening. We are grateful to share the true spirit of the holidays with the ultimate story of redemption, kindness, generosity and love.”

“We’re thrilled to create this all-new production of the quintessential holiday classic for our 50th season,” said Bob Hupp, artistic director. “This one has something for everyone; it’s a treat for young and old alike.”

With scores of memorable characters and iconic moments, Hellesen’s adaptation retains the playful, joyous and sometimes ominous tone of Dickens’ source material, while sprinkling in mesmerizing theatrical flair and spirited holiday songs like “Home at Christmastide” and “Wassail.”

“I love this particular adaptation of ‘A Christmas Carol’ because it’s wonderfully faithful to Dickens’ novella and it brings to life the celebratory flavor of the season,” added Hupp. “It’s also visually spectacular, which is something we’ve come to expect from this visionary creative team. It’s the perfect holiday celebration.”

Published in 1843 just days before Christmas, Dickens’ tale of generosity’s triumph over greed became an instant hit and is often credited with revitalizing the holiday tradition in England and the United States. “A Christmas Carol: In Prose, Being a Ghost Story of Christmas” has since been adapted countless times for the stage and screen and continues to be a touchstone of popular culture today; Scrooge’s emphatic “Bah, humbug,” and Tiny Tim’s declaration of “God Bless us, everyone,” are phrases known the world over.

Charles Dickens, widely considered amongst the greatest writers of English literature, authored some 15 novels, including “Oliver Twist,” “Great Expectations,” “The Pickwick Papers” and “A Tale of Two Cities.” He died in 1870, at the age of 58, and is buried at Poets’ Corner of Westminster Abbey in London, England.

All evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. while all matinee performances begin at 2 p.m. Tickets start at \$40 with discounts available for students and groups. Tickets may be purchased online at [SyracuseStage.org](http://SyracuseStage.org), by phone at 315.443.3275 or in person at the Syracuse Stage Box Office.

Pay-What-You-Will performances for “A Christmas Carol” are Nov. 29 – Dec. 3 inclusive; Prologue conversations, three pre-show discussions that take place one-hour before curtain time on Dec. 3, 9 and 14; the Post-show Talkback will take place on Sunday, Dec. 3 after the 7:30 performance. Syracuse Stage has its open-captioned performances scheduled for Dec. 6 and 17 at 2 p.m. and Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m., as well as an audio-described performance on Sunday, Nov. 4 at 2 p.m.

In addition, Syracuse Stage is thrilled to announce a Spanish language open-captioned performance of “A Christmas Carol” scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 30 at 7:30 p.m. With a translation commissioned from Claudia Quesada, this one-night only event is the first time Stage has offered this Spanish language option for the Central New York Community.

A special sensory friendly and open captioned performance is scheduled for Dec. 30 at 2 p.m. The sensory friendly performance provides a welcoming environment that lets all patrons enjoy themselves freely without judgment or inhibition. This live theatre experience invites autistic individuals, as well as those living with ADHD, dementia and other sensory sensitivities, to enjoy a performance in a “shush free” zone. House lights will be dimmed, but not turned out completely, patrons may move about as necessary for their comfort and patrons will not be discouraged from vocalizing during the performance. Fidget toys and other materials will be provided for patrons. All tickets to the sensory friendly performance are \$35 and include a 100 percent refund right up to the start of the show if unable to attend.

The Slutzker Family Foundation is the Presenting Sponsor for the 50th Anniversary Season. Additional season support comes from the Dorothy and Marshall M. Reisman Foundation and Advance Media New York. The community partner for “A Christmas Carol” is Interfaith Works of Central New York.

### ***A Christmas Carol***

Written by Charles Dickens

Adapted by Richard Hellesten

Music by David de Berry

Orchestrations by Gregg Coffin

Directed by Melissa Rain Anderson

Circus and Phantom staging by 2 Ring Circus

Music direction by Brian Cimmet

Choreography by Andrea Leigh-Smith

Scenic design by Kimberly Powers

Costume design by David K. Mickelsen

Lighting design by Lonnie Rafael Alcaraz

Sound design by Jacqueline R. Herter

Wig design by Ryan Moller

Production Stage Manager: Stuart Plymesser\*

Casting: Bass/Valle Casting

### **CAST (in alphabetical order)**

Annabelle Abramov‡.....Londoner, Flaring Links, Fan, Fezziwig Child, Clown, Want

Mayde Anastasio.....Londoner, Flaring Links, Fan, Want

Jaemon Anthony Crosby‡.....Fred, Phantom, Parent

Joshua Dean\*.....Lamplighter, Phantom, Circus Performer, Clown

Gwendalyn Rose Díaz‡.....Street Singer, Misses Fezziwig, Sister-in-law

Jaala Ellis.....	Belinda, School Boy, Fezziwig Child
Kaala Ellis.....	Belinda, School Boy, Fezziwig Child
Max Elmer.....	Edward, Flaring Links, Ebenezer the Child
Ben Franklin*.....	Labourer, School Teacher, Older Belle's Husband, Topper
Mackenzie Furlett‡.....	Maid 2, Phantom, Parent, Toy Seller, Charwoman
Ahitana García.....	Rich Girl, Upper Class Daughter
Sam Gregory*.....	Ebenezer Scrooge
Lydia Hall‡.....	Beggar Child, School Boy, Clown
JoJo Harper-McNeal.....	Edward, Flaring Links, Ebenezer the Child
Kevin Ilardi‡.....	Labourer, Suitor, Clown, Debtor
Milo Ladd.....	Tiny Tim, School Boy
Morgan Lewis‡.....	Maid 1, Misses Fezziwig, Party Guest
Thomas Locke‡.....	Labourer, Phantom, Parent, Suitor, Clown
David Lowenstein*.....	First Subscription Gentleman, Mr. Fezziwig, Upper Class Man, Old Joe
Madison Manning‡.....	Phantom, Belle, Clown, Londoner
Ayana Momoki*.....	Lamplighter, Phantom, Circus Performer, Clown
Morgan Perry‡.....	Martha, Parent, Party Guest
Erick Pinnick*.....	Second Subscription Gentleman, The Ghost of Christmas Present
Hayden Poe‡.....	Labourer, Phantom, Parent, Suitor, Wreath Seller
Oliver Potorac.....	Tiny Tim, School Boy
Jim Poulos*.....	Bob Cratchit, Fiddler
James Ragen‡.....	Labourer 2, Dick Wilkins, Peter
Austin Rose‡.....	Labourer 1, Ebenezer the Apprentice, Ebenezer the Young Man, Party Guest
Malachy Ruddy.....	Turkey Boy, Flaring Links, School Boy, Fezziwig Child, Ignorance
Erin Ryan Byrnes.....	Belinda, School Boy, Fezziwig Child
Anthony Schmidt.....	Turkey Boy, Flaring Links, School Boy, Fezziwig Child, Ignorance
Chloe Smith‡.....	Fred's Wife, Maid 3, Parent, Narrator, Debtor
Katy Tang*.....	Mrs. Cratchit, The Ghost of Christmas Past
Tatum Taylor.....	Rich Girl, Upper Class Daughter
John Tufts*.....	The Ghost of Jacob Marley, Londoner, Undertaker's Man
Raleigh Very‡.....	Phantom, Misses Fezziwig, Clown, Londoner
EJ Zimmerman*.....	Londoner, Mrs. Fezziwig, Upper Class Woman, Mrs. Dilber

## UNDERSTUDIES/SWINGS

For Beggar Child – Annabelle Abramov‡

For Labourer, School Teacher, Older Belle's Husband, Topper – Nathan Ayotte‡

For Street Singer, Misses Fezziwig, Sister-in-law, Fred's Wife, Maid 3, Parent, Narrator, Debtor – Emily Castillo-Langley‡

For Londoner, Mrs. Fezziwig, Upper Class Woman, Mrs. Dilber, Maid 2, Phantom, Parent, Toy Seller, Charwoman – Ally Ebert‡

For Labourer 2, Dick Wilkins, Peter, Parent, Suitor, Wreath Seller – Connor English‡

For Marley, Undertakers Man, Londoner, Ghost of Christmas Present, Second Subscription Gentleman, First Subscription Gentleman, Mr. Fezziwig, Upper Class Man, Old Joe – Ben Franklin\*

For Preshow Labourer, Bob Cratchit, Fiddler – Kevin Ilardi‡

For Martha, Parent, Party Guest, Phantom, Misses Fezziwig, Clown, Londoner – Sydney Kamel‡

For Preshow Labourer, Fred, Phantom, Parent – Thomas Locke‡

For Ebenezer Scrooge – David Lowenstein\*

For Labourer 1, Ebenezer the Apprentice, Ebenezer the Young Man, Party Guest – Hayden Poe‡

For Labourer, Phantom, Parent, Suitor, Clown, Debtor – Ethan Shavelson‡

For Preshow Lamplighter, Phantom, Circus Performer, Clown – Raleigh Very‡

For Maid 1, Misses Fezziwig, Party Guest, Phantom, Belle, Clown, Londoner – Malaika Wanjiku‡

For Mrs. Cratchit, The Ghost of Christmas Past – EJ Zimmerman\*

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States. ‡Student, Syracuse University Department of Drama

### **About Syracuse Stage:**

Founded in 1974 and celebrating its 50th Anniversary Season, Syracuse Stage is the non-profit, professional theatre company in residence at Syracuse University. It is nationally recognized for creating stimulating theatrical work that engages Central New York audiences and significantly contributes to the artistic life of Syracuse University, where it is a vital partner in achieving the educational mission of the University's Department of Drama. Stage's mission is to tell stories that engage, entertain, and inspire people to see life beyond their own experience. Each season, 70,000 patrons enjoy an adventurous mix of new plays, and bold interpretations of classics and musicals, featuring the finest theatre artists. In addition, Stage maintains a vital educational outreach program that annually serves more than 15,000 students from 14 counties. Nationally, Syracuse Stage is a member of the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for American theatre; The League of Resident Theatres (LORT), the largest professional theatre association in the country; the Professional Non-Profit Theatre Coalition (PNTC), independent venues, promoters, and festivals representing every state, Washington, D.C., and Guam. Regionally, Syracuse Stage is a member of the Arts and Cultural Leadership Alliance (ACLA), Center State CEO, the University Hill Corporation, and the East Genesee Regent Association.

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Syracuse Stage | Artistic Director: Robert M. Hupp | Managing Director: Jill A. Anderson  
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