

CHARLES DICKENS

A

CHRISTMAS

CAROL

A circular illustration of Ebenezer Scrooge, wearing a top hat and a heavy coat, holding a small child (Tiny Tim) who is also wearing a hat and a coat. They are standing on a textured surface, possibly a path or a stage.

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY

GEOFFREY SIMON BROWN

theatre:
CALGARY

Stafford Arima, Artistic Director

NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 31, 2023

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WELCOME



It's been four years since a full production of Geoffrey Simon Brown's spectacular and playful adaptation of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* has graced our stage. A lot has happened since then (but let's not go there). This Christmas classic has been home to Theatre Calgary for 35 years. Dickens' tale of transformation never gets old, and in many ways, it is important for us to be reminded that miracles are possible, and people can change.

This adaptation of *Carol* remains faithful to Dickens' original novella (published in 1843) while also embracing fresh elements, such as one of Calgary's favourite actors, Doug McKeag, playing the role of Scrooge. The first time I directed a show at Theatre Calgary was in 2018 on *The Secret Garden*. Doug played the role of Weatherstaff, and I fell in love with his generous spirit – not only as a performer but as a human being. I cannot wait for you all to experience his vivid Ebenezer Scrooge, as well as the extraordinary and talented group of new performers to this production.

The holidays are an opportunity for us to think beyond ourselves and stretch our hearts towards the needs of others. Dickens stated that the two most important characters in the story were the homeless children, Ignorance and Want. They still live on our streets, in every neighbourhood from Saskatoon to New York City to Birmingham, to just down the road from us. Geoffrey's adaptation shines a light on the themes of ignorance and want throughout the entire journey of this play, and allows us to see and hear outside of ourselves, and find empathy in our divided world.

Happy Holidays to you, and your friends, colleagues, and family. Enjoy the show.

- STAFFORD ARIMA
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, THEATRE CALGARY

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the spirit of reconciliation, Theatre Calgary acknowledges that we live, work and create on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta. They were the original occupants of this land and continue to be here to this day. Theatre Calgary is grateful to have the opportunity to present in this territory.

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We're proud to support
Theatre Calgary and
this year's performance
of *A Christmas Carol*.

Happy Holidays from everyone at McCarthy Tétrault LLP.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Cameras and audio/visual recording devices are not permitted in the theatre.
- Video and audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.
- We ask that you please refrain from using your cell phone, smart watch, or any other digital device, in any capacity, during the performance.
- Good theatre etiquette benefits everyone. Please do not talk or unwrap candies during the performance, remain in your seat until the curtain call is finished and the house lights have been turned on.
- Babies are not permitted in the theatre.
- We also offer relaxed performances. For more information, visit our website.
- Assisted listening devices for the hard of hearing are available at the coat check.
- For first aid assistance, see the house manager, or nearest usher.

SAFETY AND COMFORT

- At Theatre Calgary, we recognize our responsibility to have practical guidelines in place to ensure our performances are safe and enjoyable for everyone. To learn more about our current Safety and Comfort protocols go to theatrecalgary.com/comfort-and-safety or scan here:



PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES



The first time I read the original novella of *A Christmas Carol* I was struck by how timely it felt. Even though he was writing so specifically about the time he was living in – almost 200 years ago – it feels like Dickens tapped into something that we all seem to forget and need to be reminded of again and again: to pay attention to those around us; that we all belong to the same world.

When I first adapted *A Christmas Carol* for Theatre Calgary back in 2019, I spent a lot of time thinking about how, in an increasingly individualized world, with technology driven isolation and polarized politics dividing friends and family, it feels so vital that we can come together around a story to remind us of our shared humanity. Of course, over the

past four years – living through a pandemic, through the eruption of devastating global conflicts, through cost of living spiking at an alarming rate – those things have been put into hyperdrive. We have spent years separated from family, separated from friends, from community, and have come out the other side somehow more divided than before. I know so many people who have been left feeling scared, feeling angry, and those feelings can make it that much harder to feel connected to the larger world in which we live.

And so, in this time of uncertainty, I feel extraordinarily grateful to be able to gather together once more the full team of artists who brought this story to life on the Max Bell stage four Christmases ago and to perform this play that has been performed here every year for longer than I have been alive. It is such a joy and an honour to be invited into this tradition and this family, to get to create alongside such a large and inspiring band of Calgary artists, and to share this production with our city again this year.

I know that this play is a tradition for so many people and families in this city. I hope that this year's Carol can bring some normalcy to what has been a very unfamiliar past few years. And, for those who are experiencing this play for the first time, I hope you can find comfort and reflection in this story about redemption, resiliency, and change.

As we gather together in the theatre again, I hope this story can serve as a salve for our hearts and our sense of community. Thank you to Theatre Calgary for this tremendous opportunity and thank you for coming.

Merry Christmas and enjoy the show,

- GEOFFREY SIMON BROWN
PLAYWRIGHT

Theatre Calgary gratefully acknowledges the support provided by the City of Calgary through Calgary Arts Development, the Government of Alberta through the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, the Government of Canada through the Canada Council, Canadian Heritage, and all corporate and private contributors.



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theatre:
CALGARY

Stafford Arima, Artistic Director

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Max Bell Theatre at Arts Commons
November 30 - December 31, 2023

theatre:
CALGARY
Stafford Arima, Artistic Director

presents

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

BY **CHARLES DICKENS**
ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY
GEOFFREY SIMON BROWN

Director	STAFFORD ARIMA
Assistant Director, Voice & Dialect Coach	JANE MACFARLANE
Set & Video Design	SCOTT REID
Costume Design	DEITRA KALYN*
Lighting Design	KEVIN LAMOTTE*
Assistant Lighting Design	ANTON DEGROOT
Composer & Music Director	ALLISON LYNCH
Additional Orchestrations	JEREMY SPENCER
Choreographer	JESSE ROBB
Assistant Choreographer	ANTHONY MACPHERSON
Dramaturg	JENNA TURK
Additional Dramaturgy	JENNA RODGERS
Dance Captain	GREG PEMBER
Stage Manager	CARISSA SAMS
Assistant Stage Managers	SANG-SANG LEE, CHANDLER ONTKEAN
Apprentice Stage Manager	FRANCES MACDONALD
TC MENTORS PROGRAM	
Voice & Dialect	LARA SCHMITZ
Sound Design	DARREN YOUNG

The video or audio recording of this performance by any means is strictly prohibited.

*Indicated designers on this production are represented by the
Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659.

BEACHES

THE MUSICAL



THE TIMELESS STORY OF FRIENDSHIP

BOOK BY **Iris Rainer Dart & Thom Thomas**

MUSIC BY **Mike Stoller**

LYRICS BY **Iris Rainer Dart**

BASED ON THE NOVEL BEACHES BY
Iris Rainer Dart

DEVELOPED IN COLLABORATION WITH
David Austin

DIRECTED BY **Lonny Price**

CO-DIRECTED BY **Matt Cowart**

18 MAY – 16 JUNE, 2024

Max Bell Theatre

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theatre:
CALGARY
Stafford Arima, Artistic Director

This production is made possible by the generous support of the Al Ostien & Buddy Victor Legacy Fund.
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A CHRISTMAS CAROL

CAST (in alphabetical order)

Jacob Marley, Mr. Fezziwig, Old Joe	MARK BELLAMY
Martha Cratchit, Jane, Ensemble	SCARLETT BOWLER
Alice Cratchit, Bethel	ANNA CUMMER
Tiny Tim, Ensemble	LAURA DESMARAIS
Dick Wilkins, Topper, Simon	CHRISTOPHER DUTHIE
Fred, Walton	DANIEL FONG
Ben Cratchit, Steerforth, Ensemble	SIMON GOUTSIS
Belle, Penny, Mrs. Dilber	VANESSA LETICIA JETTÉ
Gertie Fezziwig, Ethel, Mrs. Charnock	KAREN JOHNSON-DIAMOND
Belinda Cratchit, Fan, Pickle, Ensemble	ALEXANDRIA LEE
Fiddler	ALLISON LYNCH
Ebenezer Scrooge	DOUG MCKEAG
Margaret Cratchit, Molly, Jill, Ensemble	RAINA MURADALI
Ensemble, Ebenezer Scrooge Understudy	DECLAN O'REILLY
Peter Cratchit, Boy Scrooge, Thomas, Ensemble	PARKER PAINCHAUD
Emily, Caroline	GENEVIÈVE PARÉ
Young Scrooge, Sam	JOE PERRY
Bob Cratchit, Mr. Creakle, Arnault	MIKE TAN
Christmas Past, Rose	JAMIE TOGNAZZINI
Christmas Present	MARSHALL VIELLE
Swing	JESSICA ECKSTADT
Swing	GREG PEMBER

SETTING

1843, London, England.

A Christmas Carol has one 20-minute intermission.

CREW

Head of Sound	BRONWYN BOWLBY
Head of Lighting	CATHARINE CRUMB
Head Stage Carpenter	BEN MOORE
Head Dresser	RACHEL MICHELLE SHERIDAN
Head of Video	DANIEL PLUMTREE
Alternate Head of Video	BRENDAN BRICELAND
Head of Wigs	CHRISTA HOEFLING
Assistant Head of Sound	MICHAEL GESY
Assistant Head Stage Carpenter	JOSHUA SEMOS
Stage Hands	JACKSON BUCHANAN, TESS COWIE
Dressers	CHELSEA BREWER, BRIANNA DIODATI, KIERRA VOLK
Wardrobe Maintenance	ERIN GODDEN
Young Company Chaperone	KATHLEEN FAITH BALLANGAN

Theatre Calgary is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and operates within the jurisdiction of the Canadian Theatre Agreement. Theatre Calgary employs technicians under a collective agreement with the I.A.T.S.E. Theatre Calgary is a resident company of Arts Commons, operating out of Arts Commons Max Bell Theatre.





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CAST



MARK BELLAMY

Jacob Marley, Mr. Fezziwig, Old Joe

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: Director - *Noises Off*; Assistant Director/Choreographer - *Rough Crossing*; Actor - *Camelot*, *A Christmas Carol* (1990, 1993, 1995, 2019), *Anne of Green Gables* (1994), *Evita* (1993), *Pal Joey*. Mark is very happy to be back at Theatre Calgary with friends old and new to revisit *A Christmas Carol* after a 4-year hiatus! Recent credits include: Director - *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* (Stage West); *Becoming Dr. Ruth*

(TNW); Actor - *Murder in the Studio*, *Deathtrap* (Vertigo Theatre); *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead* (ATP); *Moon, Moon, No Moon* (OYR); *In On It* (Lunchbox Theatre). He is the proud recipient of several Betty Mitchell Awards, as well as the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal. Mark would like to dedicate his performance to the memory of his dear friend Kevin Rothery, who truly knew how to keep Christmas well.



SCARLETT BOWLER

Martha Cratchit, Jane, Ensemble

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Having watched this magical classic time and again, Scarlett is over the moon to be part of this year's production of *A Christmas Carol*. Scarlett loves to tell a good story and is delighted to have the opportunity to do so with this amazing cast and company. Scarlett is in grade eight, speaks French, is dabbling in Spanish, and loves to sing, dance and of course, act. She would like to thank her family,

friends, and teachers for their support and encouragement throughout this incredible experience. You may notice them in the audience - they'll be the noisy ones. Oh, and Merry Christmas!



ANNA CUMMER

Alice Cratchit, Bethel

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare on the Go adaptation - 2023), *Admissions*, *A Christmas Carol* (2018-19), *Noises Off*, *Twelfth Night* (2018), *The Shoplifters*, *Pride and Prejudice*. Elsewhere: Anna is a Calgary-based actor and playwright. She has performed across Canada at The Vancouver Playhouse, The Arts Club, Bard on the Beach, Alberta Theatre Projects, Vertigo Theatre, Persephone, and the

National Arts Centre. She also works in voice-over as well as in film & television as an actor and puppeteer. Anna has been nominated for numerous acting awards with a few trophies making their way to her mantle. She is thrilled to be back on stage helping to tell one of her favourite stories. Thank you to Craig, Olive, and Aubrey for all the support. This would not be possible without their love.

CAST



LAURA DESMARAIS

Tiny Tim, Ensemble

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Laura is thrilled to be making her Theatre Calgary debut! She last appeared onstage as Young Charlie in Front Row Centre Players' award winning production of *Kinky Boots*. Laura is delighted to be a part of this classic Christmas tale and so grateful for the opportunity to work with an amazing cast and crew. Offstage, Laura keeps busy with dance classes, musical theatre training, piano lessons, and all

kinds of outdoor activities. She loves writing songs and creating magical worlds with her older sister and her friends. Laura thanks her loving family and friends for their unconditional support. She hopes you enjoy the show!



CHRISTOPHER DUTHIE

Dick Wilkins, Topper, Simon

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *The Importance of Being Earnest* (2022), *A Christmas Carol* (2007-09, 2019). Christopher is thrilled to be back onstage at Theatre Calgary. He has been acting professionally for more than a decade in productions with Ghost River Theatre, Vertigo Theatre, One Yellow Rabbit, Lunchbox Theatre, Quest Theatre, Alberta Theatre Projects, etc. He is represented by Details Talent for film/tv and voice over.

As a playwright and theatre creator, his plays and creations include: *A Dinner Party* (Shortlisted for the 2020 Gwen Pharis Ringwood Award for Drama); *n00b* (Vertigo Theatre Y-Stage Series); *SensoryBox* (Ghost River Theatre); *SensoryBox TYA* (Young People's Theatre); *La Boîte Sensorielle* (L'UniThéâtre) co-created with Eric Rose; *Of Fighting Age* co-created with Col Cseke and David van Belle (Verb Theatre/Glenbow Museum/High Performance Rodeo). He holds an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph and a BFA in Drama from the University of Calgary. He is eternally grateful for his wife, Alexandra, for all her love and support.



JESSICA ECKSTADT

Swing

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *Ragtime: A Concert Performance*. Jessica discovered her love for the performing arts at a young age. She believes sharing her passion through acting or teaching is one of the best experiences in life. When Jessica is not performing, she is very proud to be an award-winning choreographer for the Youth Singers of Calgary, as well as teaching students from across the city to hone and discover their passion for the

performing arts through various classes and private lessons. She is a Betty Mitchell Award nominated performer and has had the pleasure of performing across Canada,

CAST

the United States, Europe, and South America. She holds a performance diploma from Mount Royal University (Calgary, AB) and BFA from Concordia University (Montreal, QC). Jessica is very thankful for the entire team at Theatre Calgary as well as her loved ones and supporters. Best wishes to everyone this holiday season!



DANIEL FONG
Fred, Walton

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *Forgiveness, A Christmas Carol* (2018), *A Midsummer Nights Dream* (Shakespeare in the Park, 2012). Daniel is a mixed race Chinese/European performer born and raised in Moh-kins-tsis (Calgary) in the Treaty 7 region of Alberta and he is thrilled to be joining this wonderful team! Elsewhere: *Jekyll & Hyde* (Vertigo Theatre); *Romeo & Juliet* (Bard on the Beach); *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* (Rosebud Theatre); *US* (The Globe); *Alberta Kitchen Party, The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, Fortune Falls, The Circle* (ATP); *The Tempest* (The Shakespeare Company). Daniel was the recipient of the Stephen Hair emerging artist award in 2020. You can catch him next as D'Artagnan in the Citadel Theatre's production of *The Three Musketeers!* Daniel is supported by his amazing wife Nadia and his friends and family and he wishes you all the happiest of holidays!



SIMON GOUTSIS
Ben Cratchit, Steerforth, Ensemble

(he/him) Theatre Calgary debut. Simon played Horton in Capitol Hill Schools production of *Seussical the Musical: Kids* (2023). He has also enjoyed drama camps at Calgary Young People's Theatre for the last three summers. Simon has taken some vocal, piano, and guitar lessons, and is currently in Grade six at Capitol Hill School. He is an avid reader, a die-hard Flames fan, and the starting goalie on his hockey team. Simon is an amazing big brother to Clayton, and would like to thank Clay and his whole family for all their love and support.



VANESSA LETICIA JETTÉ
Belle, Penny, Mrs. Dilber

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *The Mousetrap, Little Women, A Christmas Carol* (2019, 2021), *Hamlet* (Shakespeare by the Bow). Vanessa is a Mexican-Canadian artist working in Calgary! You may have seen her on stage with companies such as Vertigo Theatre (*The Extractionist, Clue, Sherlock Holmes and The Vanishing Thimble*); Lunchbox Theatre Stage Two series (*By the Book*); Major Matt Mason (*Premium Content*); One Yellow Rabbit: BeautifulYoungArtists; The Shakespeare Company (*Hamlet Frequency*). She is forever grateful to her family and to her partner Chris for all their support and she hopes you all enjoy the show!

TOONIES FOR TURKEYS

Once again this year, at the conclusion of the performance we will be accepting donations in our lobby for our annual Toonies for Turkeys campaign to support local families in need. 100% of all donations collected go directly to the Calgary Food Bank to help fight hunger in Calgary.

You can also donate online at:
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Our thanks to The Cal Wenzel Family Foundation for supporting our production of *A Christmas Carol* and to Shane Homes for their donation to the Toonies for Turkeys initiative.

CAST



KAREN JOHNSON-DIAMOND

Gertie Fezziwig, Ethel, Mrs. Charnock

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary (selected): *A Christmas Carol* (2019, 2021), *The Crucible*, *Jake and the Kid*. Karen is a Calgary based actor, director, and improviser. She has acted in four different productions of this play, and has directed one, and never gets tired of telling this story. Karen's mom doesn't like biographies that are just 'lists', so she'll pause here to say that one of Neil Diamond's best songs is "Be" from the Jonathan

Livingston Seagull soundtrack. You should listen to it when you get home tonight. Thank you for supporting live theatre. Love to Kevin, Griffin, and Neil Diamond.



ALEXANDRIA LEE

Belinda Cratchit, Fan, Pickle, Ensemble

(she/her) Theatre Calgary Debut. Alexandria is so excited to have the opportunity to work with Theatre Calgary for *A Christmas Carol*! Elsewhere: *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Annie* (Storybook Theatre); *Friends of Mine* and *The Tuesday Crew*, *A Little Princess* (Calgary Young People's Theatre); *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Notre Dame High School). Alexandria is currently a grade 11 student at Notre Dame High School. She

would like to thank her vocal coach and accompanist, Selina Wong-Parrotta and Dan Perrott for always believing in her and pushing her to audition for Theatre Calgary. And a big shout-out to her family and her friends for their never-ending support. She hopes you enjoy the show and have a Merry Christmas! @alexandriaalee



ALLISON LYNCH

Composer, Music Director, Fiddler

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Actor – *Forgiveness*, *Steel Magnolias*, *A Christmas Carol* (2010-21), *The Secret Garden*, *Dear Johnny Deere*, *One Man, Two Guvnors*; Sound Designer/Composer – *A Christmas Carol* (2019-21), *Steel Magnolias*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare by the Bow), *Comedy of Errors* (Shakespeare on the Go); Music Director – *A Christmas Carol* (2016-19).

Elsewhere: Allison was the recipient of four Betty Mitchell Awards for *Romeo & Juliet* (The Shakespeare Co.), *Ash Rizin'* (Alberta Theatre Projects), *Twisted* (Forté) and as a composer for *The Scarlet Letter* (Theatre Calgary), as well as a Greater Victoria Regional Theatre Awards Critic's Choice award for Design for *The Ministry of Grace* (Belfry). You may have also seen Allison onstage at the NAC, The Grand, Rainbow Stage, Persephone, The Drayton Festival, the Chemainus Theatre Festival, Vertigo, ATP, Lunchbox, OYR, Calgary Philharmonic, and as far abroad as Kuala Lumpur with the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra. Her album *Skin & Flame* is on all streaming platforms.

CAST



DOUG MCKEAG

Ebenezer Scrooge

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: over 30 productions. Favourites include: *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *From Berlin to Broadway with Kurt Weill*, *God of Carnage*, *Jimmy Buffett's Escape to Margaritaville*, *Enron*, *Evita* (1992 & 2002), *Cabaret*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *Into the Woods*, *Twelfth Night* (2017), *The Secret Garden*, *One Man*, *Two Guvvners*, *Ragtime: A Concert Performance*. Other faves elsewhere: *Little Mercy's First Murder*, *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*,

The Mystery of Edwin Drood (Vertigo); *X-Ray*, *The Alan Parkinson's Project*, *DOOM 2012* (Ghost River); *Toad of Toad Hall*, *Amadeus*, *Candide* (ATP); *Carmen*, *Die Fledermaus* (Calgary Opera); *Chimerica* (RMTC/Canstage); *Late Company*, *The Cottage*, *The New Canadian Curling Club* (RMTC); and dozens of performances with the Calgary Philharmonic and many other orchestras worldwide, from Kuala Lumpur to the Hollywood Bowl. Doug is the proud owner of "BonnyBoom", Calgary's newest multi-disciplinary arts playground in Bonnybrook, and home to the Old Trout Puppet Workshop. Next summer he will christen "BonnyToo" as the new home of the Green Fools Theatre Society, just two blocks away. Doug dedicates this performance to Stephen Hair, who carried the Scrooge torch for 27 years. Big slippers to fill.



RAINA MURADALI

Margaret Cratchit, Molly, Jill, Ensemble

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Raina's passion for storytelling through acting, singing, and dance has been a lifelong pursuit starting at the tender age of 3. Her acting portfolio includes memorable roles in productions such as *The Sound of Music*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, and *Singers @ Sunset* for Storybook Theatre; *Clue* and *The Poison Squad* with Calgary Young People's Theatre; and a return to *The Sound of Music* at Painted Fish Theatre.

Beyond acting, she has honed her skills in dance since the age of four. Currently a seventh grader, Raina's dedication recently earned her both a National and a Regional Gold Medal with the Royal Conservatory of Music for Speech Arts & Drama. She extends her heartfelt gratitude to her unwavering parents, her dedicated speech/acting and singing coaches, and the incredible cast and crew who welcomed her into this production. Happy Holidays to all! @rainamuradali

CAST



DECLAN O'REILLY

Ensemble, Ebenezer Scrooge Understudy

For Theatre Calgary (selected): *A Christmas Carol* (1991-93, 1996, 2015-19), *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Audience*, *King Lear*, *One Man, Two Guvnors*. Recent credits include: *The Shoplifters* (Theatre NorthWest). *Much Ado About Nothing* (Shakespeare Company); *The Lonely Diner* (Vertigo Theatre); *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, *Jeeves Takes a Bow* (Chemainus Theatre); *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *Tent Meeting* (Rosebud Theatre); *Shakespeare's Rebel*, *King Lear* (Bard on the Beach); *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Sage

/ Shadow Theatre co-production). Declan has multiple film and TV credits including *Under the Banner of Heaven*, *Billy The Kid*, *Prancer Returns*, and the soon to be released *The Birds Who Fear Death*. He is also a visual artist and graduate of the University of Alberta BFA Acting program, and a founder of Edmonton's Free Will Players Shakespeare Company. IG: @oreillydeclan Website: www.oreillydeclan.com



PARKER PAINCHAUD

Peter Cratchit, Boy Scrooge, Thomas, Ensemble

(he/him) Theatre Calgary debut. Parker began his passion for acting with Calgary Young People's Theatre. He has been part of the last two Cannonball Festivals, playing Leo in *Dreamer The Musical* (2022), and The Powerkeeper in *Magic* (2023). He performed in CYPT's mainstage productions as the villain Cesare in *Real Boi* (2022), and Walter/Thing in the musical *The Poison Squad* (2023). He most recently played Nicky/Mr.Weston in *Someday* with CYPT. Parker loves to play golf, is a comic book

enthusiast, enjoys spending time with friends and working on creative endeavors. Parker has recently written his first script, and will be bringing it to the stage in Cannonball Festival 2024, along with his directorial debut. Parker would like to thank his CYPT family for encouraging and supporting him through this journey.



GENEVIÈVE PARÉ

Emily, Caroline

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *A Christmas Carol* (2019). Geneviève is in the practice and profession of building, shaping, and performing live theatre, and digital media. From puppetry, to stunt wrestling, to junk percussion and videography, Geneviève will jump at any opportunity to find new ways to tell stories. She even loves the classics and is so excited to be back in the Max Bell Theatre on the other side of the pandemic, to help bring Geoffrey Simon Brown's fulsome rendition of *A*

Christmas Carol back to the stage. Recent works also include: *Fraggle Rock: Back to the Rock* (Jim Henson Company); *Iniskim* (Canadian Academy of Mask and Puppetry); *GIANT* (Ghost River Theatre). Geneviève is a two-time Betty Mitchell Award winner, and a recipient of Theatre Calgary's Emerging Actor Award.

CAST



GREG PEMBER

Swing, Dance Captain

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *Jimmy Buffett's Escape to Margaritaville*, *Crazy For You*, Swing Dance Choreographer for *Forgiveness*. Elsewhere: *Spamalot*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Screwball Comedy*, *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert* (Stage West); Choreographer for *Elf: The Musical* and *Honk!* (Storybook Theatre). *Brigadoon* (The Shaw Festival); *Newsies*, *Shear Madness*, *The Rainmaker*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Beauty and the*

Beast, *Rock of Ages*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *It Runs in the Family*, *White Christmas*, *The Music Man*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Footloose*, *Damn Yankees*, *Legally Blonde*, *Mary Poppins*, *The Sound of Music* (Drayton Entertainment); *Ghostlight* (Off-Broadway/Signature Theatre); *Spring Awakening*, title role in *Hamlet* (The Roxy). Training: BFA in Musical Theatre from The Boston Conservatory. Love and gratitude to Mom, Dad, Bob, and Scott for their unconditional support and for allowing me to follow my dream. IG: @yoga.with.greg yogawithgreg.com



JOE PERRY

Sam, Young Scrooge, Arnault

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *A Christmas Carol* (2015-16). Elsewhere (selected): *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*, *The Extractionist* (Vertigo Theatre); *Premium Content* (Major Matt Mason); *Chariots Of Fire* (Grand Theatre); *Gordon* (Theatre Network); *This Is War* (Punctuate); *The Circle* (ATP). Selected Film and TV: *Coupled Up For Christmas* (Northern Gateway Films); *Range Roads* (North Country Cinema); *The Expanse*

(Amazon Prime); *Black Summer* (Netflix). Joe is a Calgary based artist and creator working across Canada in theatre, film and television. He graduated from Mount Royal Universities Performance Program and received his BFA in acting from the University of Alberta.



MIKE TAN

Bob Cratchit, Mr. Creakle

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *The Mousetrap*, *A Christmas Carol* (2017-18, 2021). Mike is a Treaty 7-based theatre artist and photographer. He has worked as a co-creator in devised theatre creation ensembles with Downstage, Theatre Junction, and Ghost River Theatre; an acting ensemble member at the Banff Centre Playwrights Lab workshoping new plays from around the world; and as an actor at Vertigo Theatre (*The Extractionist*,

Murder on the Orient Express); Alberta Theatre Projects (*Constellations*); Major Matt Mason Collective (*Premium Content*); Field Work Theatre (*Parts & Labour*); and

CAST

Jupiter Theatre (*Frankenstein*). Mike also works as a documentary photographer for arts and culture organizations (*Calgary Folk Fest, Sled Island*), events, and independent artists. He lives with his loves, Di, his son Aiden, and their cat babies, Frankie and Prismo.



JAMIE TOGNAZZINI

Christmas Past, Rose

(they/them) For Theatre Calgary: *A Christmas Carol* (2019-21). Jamie T is a transdisciplinary performer with special interest in music, clown/circus, and puppetry. In 2019, Jamie T was honoured as co-recipient of the Betty Mitchell Award for Best Ensemble for their work in *GIANT* by Ghost River Theatre. Select credits include: *Wyrd...A Musical Unfairytale* (Atomic Vaudeville/Larrikin, YT); *Blackhorse* (Caravan Farm Theatre); *Peter and the*

Wolf (Old Trout Puppet Workshop); *Naughty but Nice 9 Live!* (Forte Musical Theatre); *Gold Rush Redux & ModernTimes Redux* (The Grand YYC); Catalyst Theatre's *Fortune Falls* (ATP/Citadel); *The Drowning Girls* (Vertigo Theatre); *The Toxic Avenger Musical* (Broadway West); *Evil Dead: the Musical* (GZT/H&M); *Moon, Moon No Moon* and *Calgary, I Love You but You're Killing Me* (One Yellow Rabbit). Sharing the holidays with such wonderful people is an honour and a privilege. Thanks to everyone making the season bright!



MARSHALL VIELLE

Christmas Present

(they/them) For Theatre Calgary: *A Christmas Carol* (2019-21), *Blow Wind High Water*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Shakespeare by the Bow). Elsewhere: *The Jungle Book* (ATP); *The House of Bernarda Alba* (Sage Theatre); *Christmas Carol: A Drag Story* (Blue Jeans Theatre); *Where the Two-Spirit Lives* (Theatre Outré); *Napi and the Rock* (Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra); *Iiyistsiyii, Istotsi, Kaahsinoniks* (Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society);

We Are All Treaty People (Quest Theatre). Marshall is an actor, director, playwright, and drag performer from the Kainai Nation. They are especially interested in using theatre for community development, having been involved in projects both locally and internationally aimed at using artistic practices to promote social change. They work as an advocate for diversity and inclusion in the performance sector, while also lending their creativity to several Queer Youth initiatives. Marshall is ecstatic to be back at TC for another holiday season!

CREATIVE TEAM



GEOFFREY SIMON BROWN

Playwright

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: Playwright – *A Christmas Carol* (2019-2021); Actor – *Skylight*, *Much Ado About Nothing*. Geoffrey is an award-winning Albertan playwright, actor, and theatre creator. He is a founding member of the Major Matt Mason Collective where he has developed and produced small-scale independent theatre for the past decade. His other plays include *Michael Mysterious*, *The Circle*, *Night*, *Progress*, *Still*

Still Still, *Control*, *Air*, *Destroy*, and *If I Could Tell You Everything* (written alongside the Theatre Junction high school mentorship ensemble). As an actor he has performed on most of the major stages in Calgary as well as some living rooms and basements. He is a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada's playwriting program. More at geffreysimonbrown.com.



STAFFORD ARIMA

Director

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *Forgiveness* (Outstanding Direction, Betty Mitchell Award), *Ragtime: A Concert Performance*, *A Christmas Carol* (2019-21), *Billy Elliot the Musical*, *The Secret Garden*, *Mary and Max*. Broadway: *Allegiance*, *Seussical* (Associate Director), *A Class Act* (Associate Director). Off-Broadway: *Altar Boyz*, *Carrie*, *The Tin Pan Alley Rag*. Regional: *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well* and *Living in Paris* (Stratford

Festival), *Dial M for Murder* (The Old Globe), *Bhangin' It* (La Jolla Playhouse), *Candide* (San Francisco Symphony). International: *Ragtime* (West End, Olivier nominated), *The Secret Garden* (Tokyo), *Broadway Dreams* (Moscow), *Altar Boyz* (Seoul). Stafford is a graduate of York University, and a founding Board member of the Canadian Guild of Stage Directors and Choreographers. staffordarima.com



JANE MACFARLANE

Assistant Director, Voice & Dialect Coach

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Resident Voice Coach – More than 65 productions since 2000 including: *The Mousetrap*, *Jimmy Buffett's Escape to Margaritaville*, *Forgiveness*, *Little Women*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Million Dollar Quartet*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Admissions*, *The Louder We Get*, *Noises Off*, *Billy Elliot the Musical*, 12 seasons of Shakespeare by the Bow and 15 years of *A Christmas Carol* (including playing Mrs. Cratchit from

2001-02). Additionally, Jane adapted and directed the 2022 Shakespeare on the Go production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. She has also worked for ATP, Vertigo Theatre, and The Shakespeare Company. Jane also coaches Voice and Presence

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through her business Voice Activated. She has taught Voice for the Actor and Acting at such institutions as York University, Harvard University, Southern Methodist University, MRU, UofA, and is currently on faculty in the Drama Division in the School of Creative & Performing Arts at UCalgary.



SCOTT REID

Set & Video Design

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary (selected): *The Mousetrap*, *Million Dollar Quartet*, *TC Returns*, *A Christmas Carol* (lighting - 1999, set & projections - 2019, production design - 2020, 2021), *Billy Elliot the Musical*, *Mom's The Word: For Crying Out Loud*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *A Raisin in the Sun*. Elsewhere: *Pride and Prejudice*, *Clue* (Citadel); *Alberta Kitchen Party*, *Stealing Sam*, *Disgraced*, *The New Canadian Curling Club*

(ATP); *Misery*, *Clue*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Strangers on a Train*, *Dracula: The Bloody Truth* (Vertigo); *Macbeth*, *Eugene Onegin*, *South Pacific* (Calgary Opera); *Our Canada*, *Class Acts* (Alberta Ballet); *Better Get Hit in Your Soul*, *Modern Vaudevillians*, *Juliet and Romeo* (DJD). Scott has also designed for such companies as Quest Theatre, Lunchbox, and The Shakespeare Company. scottreiddesign.com



DEITRA KALYN

Costume Design

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *The Mousetrap*, *A Christmas Carol* (2019, 2021), *MDQ*, *Noises Off*, *Shakespeare by the Bow* (2012-2018, 2021), *Blow Wind High Water*, *The Crucible*, *One Man, Two Guvnors*, *King Lear*. She has been designing theatre, dance, film, and TV across the prairies for well over a decade. She is an awarded designer who was educated both at Grant MacEwan University and ACAD. Her career in design has allowed her

to work with some of the best companies in the country. Selected credits include: *Dracula: the Bloody Truth!*, *Calamity Town*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The 39 Steps* (Vertigo); *Intimate Apparel*, *Legend Has It*, *playRites 2013* (ATP); *The Penelopiad* (ATP / Arts Club). Wishing everyone a safe and joyous holiday season! Sending all my love to my brood of boys. xo



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Photo credits: The cast of *Billy Elliot the Musical*;
The cast of *A Christmas Carol* (2019). Photos: Trudie Lee.

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KEVIN LAMOTTE

Lighting Design

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *A Christmas Carol* (2000-18), *The Crucible*, *The Philadelphia Story* (2005, 2015), *Enron*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Beyond Eden*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Timothy Findley's The Wars*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Saint Joan*, *Macbeth*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *True West*, *Candida*. Kevin has created lighting designs for theatre, dance and opera across Canada and internationally. Recently: *Mahabharata* (Barbican);

Blithe Spirit, *Playboy of the Western World*, *The Clearing*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Everybody, Desire Under the Elms*, *White Christmas* (Shaw Festival); *La Traviata* (Calgary Opera / Opera de Montreal); *Fidelio* (Pacific Opera). Kevin's awards for Outstanding Lighting Design include Calgary's Betty Mitchell Awards and Toronto's Dora Mavor Moore Awards. Kevin is the Lighting Design Director for the Shaw Festival in Niagara on the Lake, Ontario, and a member of The Associated Designers of Canada/IATSE 659.



ANTON DEGROOT

Assistant Lighting Design

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare on the Go), *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Noises Off*, *The Shoplifters*. Anton is a set, light, and sound designer based here in Calgary. He is so grateful to be joining the *Carol* creative team - a show he first saw right here in the mid-1980s, and that may have first given him the idea that playmaking could be part of his life. Select credits: *Misery*, *Nine*

Dragons, *Dracula: The Bloody Truth* (Vertigo); *STRUCK*, *GIANT* (Ghost River); *Treasure Island*, *HMS Pinafore*, *Brontë: the World Without* (Stratford Festival); *Jersey Boys*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (Stage West); *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *All's Well That Ends Well* (Shakespeare Company). Anton teaches every angle of design and tech theatre at the University of Calgary, and has twice co-facilitated an international devised scenography intensive at the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space. All the love to Meg, and to our menagerie of misfit creatures.



JESSE ROBB

Choreographer

For Theatre Calgary: *A Christmas Carol* (2019). Jesse hails from Canada with a wide resume covering a variety of work across Cirque Du Soleil, Disney, Cameron Mackintosh Ltd., Mirvish Productions, Momix, Prime Video, Opera Philadelphia, RWS Entertainment Group, and Turner Classic Movies. On Broadway, Jesse is the Choreographer of *Water for Elephants* at the Imperial Theater, opening in the spring of 2024. He choreographed

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Spamalot that ran through November 2023 at The Stratford Festival of Canada. He was the Associate Choreographer to Bob Avian for the Tony nominated revival of *Miss Saigon* and staged the subsequent North American tour and Austrian companies. Jesse is also the Associate Musical Stager for the North American tour of *Les Misérables*, and the Movement Director for the Korean production. His work has been produced regionally at Ogunquit Playhouse, The 5th Avenue Theatre, The Ordway, Cape Playhouse, and the Berkshire Theatre Festival among others. Many thanks to his parents, Les and Roberta Robb, for their unwavering support.



ANTHONY MACPHERSON

Assistant Choreographer

(he/they) Theatre Calgary debut. Anthony is a creator, performer, and educator based in Halifax, NS. He has choreographed *Good Grief* (Ship's Company); *Assassins*, *Metamorphoses* (Theatre Sheridan); *Godspell* (FAST); *Sugar Highs* — Season 1 (Emotion); and was the Associate Choreographer for the world premiere of *Kronborg: The Hamlet Rock Musical* (Charlottetown); and *Mamma Mia!* (The Grand/Charlottetown). Additionally, Anthony has been Dance Captain for countless productions across North America including *Matilda* (1st National Tour/Mirvish); *Monty Python's Spamalot* (Stratford Festival); *Elf: The Musical*, *Alice in Pantoland*, *The Jungle Book* (Neptune Theatre); *Alice Through The Looking Glass*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *Ring of Fire* (Charlottetown). In 2024 Anthony plans to return The Stratford Festival for his second season to work on *La Cage Aux Folles* and *Something Rotten!* @armacpherson



JENNA TURK

Dramaturg

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Director – *Iceland*; Dramaturg – *Honour Beat*; Adaptor (Shakespeare by the Bow) – *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *As You Like It*. Between 2016-2020, Jenna was the Artistic Associate at Theatre Calgary where she focused on new play development and founded TC Mentors. More recently she has been working in television as a Script Coordinator on *Billy the Kid* Season 2 (Paramount+), and on *Ride* (Hallmark). While she's keen to do more theatre, this winter she's directing a docuseries called *Meet Cute in Kensington* – an interview series celebrating connections made in Calgary's beloved Kensington Village. Jenna has a BFA in Acting from the University of Windsor and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph. Wishing all a safe, warm, and loving holiday season. May there be peace on earth.

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CARISSA SAMS

Stage Manager

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Stage Manager – *Little Women*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2019, 2012), *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *As You Like It*, *Hamlet* (Shakespeare by the Bow). Assistant Stage Manager – *Jimmy Buffett's Escape to Margaritaville*, *Steel Magnolias*, *A Christmas Carol* (2019), *Billy Elliot the Musical*, *The Humans*, *Skylight*, *The Light in the Piazza*, *Bad Jews*. Other selected credits: *The Dark Lady*, *Raising Stanley/Life with Tulia* (Lunchbox); *Undressed*, *Stealing Sam* (ATP); *Misery*, *Clue*, *Murder in the Studio*, *39 Steps*, *The Haunting*, *Our Man in Havana*, *I'll Be Back Before Midnight* (Vertigo); *The Children*, *A Doll's House Pt. 2* (Belfry Theatre); *Smoke* (Downstage). Carissa would like to thank her husband, Myles, and her parents for their continued support.



SANG-SANG LEE

Assistant Stage Manager

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, *Honour Beat*. Selected credits: *The Amen Corner*, *The Clearing* (Shaw Festival); *Rock of Ages*, *Vegas Live*, *Sexy Laundry*, *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*, *Super Groovy 70s*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* (Mayfield); *The Herd* (Citadel/Tarragon); Banff Centre's Opera in the 21st Century; *The Fiancée*, *A Brimful of Asha*, *The Tempest*, *Hadestown*, *Redpatch*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Million Dollar Quartet*, *West Side Story*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Avenue Q*, *One Man, Two Guvnors*, *Make Mine Love*, *Spamalot*, *Private Lives* (Citadel); *The Exquisite Hour*, *Love is for Poor People*, *Fever Land* (Teatro Live!); *Makings of a Voice*, *The Blue Hour* (SkirtsAfire); *Disgraced* (ATP); *Hamlet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *King Lear*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Freewill Shakespeare); *Salt Baby* (Globe); *Songs My Mother Never Sung Me* (Concrete Theatre). Wishing you a joyous holiday season!



CHANDLER ONTKEAN

Assistant Stage Manager

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Apprentice Stage Manager – *Mary and Max*, *Noises Off*. Chandler is excited to be back at Theatre Calgary and she's ready to spread some Christmas spirit! Select SM/ASM credits include: *Home For the Holidays*, *Shark Bite* (Lunchbox); *Cowgirl Up* (ATP); *Whispers in the Dark*, *Deathtrap*, *The Lonely Diner*, *Undercover* (Vertigo); *Elvis Has Left the Building*, *Screwball Comedy* (Stage West). When not working in theatre, Chandler also works in film costuming, watches LOTS of movies, and admires sloths. Big thanks to her amazing roommates, friends, and family for their love and support throughout the last few crazy years.

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FRANCES MACDONALD

Apprentice Stage Manager

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Frances is delighted to be working with Theatre Calgary! She has had the pleasure of working in Calgary as a (non-union) Stage Manager since 2019. Apprenticeship credits: *The Dark Lady* (Lunchbox Theatre); *Cottagers and Indians* (Lunchbox Theatre); *Stone Soup & Festive Favorites* (Calgary Opera); *Cipher* (Vertigo Theatre). Stage Management credits: *Grace & Glorie* (Rosebud Theatre); *A*

Christmas Carol (Rosebud Theatre); *Wandering with Wonder* (Storyfair Productions); *Snowblind* (Lunchbox Theatre & Making Treaty 7); *Matilda* (Storybook Theatre). Assistant Stage Management credits: *O'kosi* (Making Treaty 7); *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Rosebud Theatre).

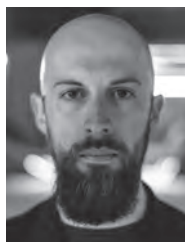


LARA SCHMITZ

TC Mentors Program* - Voice & Dialect

For Theatre Calgary: *Iceland, Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare by the Bow 2013). Lara is a local actor, educator, and writer. As an actor, Lara's most recent credits include *The Ministry of Grace* (Making Treaty 7, Belfry Theatre), *Murder on the Orient Express* (Vertigo Theatre), and *Iceland* (Theatre Calgary). Lara is excited to delve into Voice and Dialect Coaching to further explore how multifaceted and fascinating voice work is! Thanks to Theatre

Calgary and Jane for this opportunity.



DARREN YOUNG

TC Mentors Program* - Sound Design

(he/him) Theatre Calgary debut. Multi-instrumentalist, composer, sound designer, music director, and educator Darren is an exciting artist with a diverse palette. He has been a featured performer with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, New Music Edmonton, New Works Calgary, Kensington Sinfonia, Instrumental Society of Calgary, and Theatre Calgary. In 2022, Darren premiered a work in collaboration with dance soloist Alèn Martel as part of "SHED | knowing each other as different and

the same" (Pam Tzeng, Dancers' Studio West) in Chinatown, Calgary, AB. His most recent composition, sound design for the art installation "Impossible Geometries" (AZMA Digital) can currently be heard at THEMUSEUM in Kitchener, ON. Upcoming projects include sound design for the Vertigo Theatre production of *Heist* (Jan/Feb 2024) and a dance film score for choreographer Meghann Michalsky. Darren is thrilled to be part of *A Christmas Carol* and to work with the Theatre Calgary team!

* TC Mentors participants are generously supported by the RBC Emerging Artist Program.

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A CHRISTMAS CAROL

“Marley was dead, to begin with.” With those six words, Charles Dickens invited us into the world of *A Christmas Carol*, indelibly introducing us to Ebenezer Scrooge, the three ghosts of Christmas, Tiny Tim, and a full cast of memorable characters. Though he spent mere weeks writing it, Dickens’ novella about the original Christmas Grinch has been a holiday staple for nearly two centuries, giving rise to countless adaptations for stage and screen. It was such an immediate hit, that barely a month after its debut, Dickens was embroiled in a legal fight against a publishing company that had printed pirated copies.

In the spirit of the season, here are some interesting facts you may not know about the Christmas classic.

Did you know... *A Christmas Carol* was just one of several Christmas-themed stories written by Charles Dickens. The novella’s full title is *A Christmas Carol. In Prose. Being a Ghost Story of Christmas*.

Did you know... Dickens wrote the novella in just six weeks, under financial pressure. Reportedly Dickens wrote the story while taking hours-long nighttime walks around London.

Did you know... *A Christmas Carol* was first published on December 19, 1843, with the first edition sold out by Christmas Eve. By 1844, the novella had gone through 13 printings and continues to be a robust seller more than 175 years later.

Did you know... Dickens didn’t make very much money from early editions of *A Christmas Carol*. Though it was a runaway best seller, Dickens was very fastidious about the endpapers and how the book was bound, and the price of materials took a big chunk out of his potential profits.

Did you know... Like many of Dickens’ other works, *A Christmas Carol* was written as a work of social commentary. Dickens had a lifelong devotion to helping the underserved due to his own family’s experiences with debtors’ prison, which forced him to drop out of school as a boy and work at a factory. As Dickens’ biographer Michael Slater described, the author thought of *A Christmas Carol* as a way to: “help open the hearts of the prosperous and powerful towards the poor and powerless...”

Did you know... Upon publishing the first edition of *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens had his 66-page heavily revised handwritten manuscript bound in crimson leather and decorated in gilt before gifting it to his friend—and creditor—Thomas Mitton, whose name was also inscribed on the cover in gilt.

Did you know... While *A Christmas Carol* was received favorably by many of Dickens’ author peers, a 32-year-old Mark Twain was not a fan. Credited as the first writer to do reading tours of his work, Dickens read *A Christmas Carol* to American audiences during his second visit to the U.S. Twain’s review of the now-iconic book? “There is no heart. No feeling—it is nothing but glittering frostwork.”



A Q&A WITH DARYL CLORAN, DIRECTOR OF *AS YOU LIKE IT*

*Coming to Theatre Calgary
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The Bard Meets The Beatles in a Mashed-Up Musical

It's the 1960s, and things are getting groovy in the Forest of Arden. Shakespeare's classic comedy of love and mistaken identity is given new life in this high-spirited adaptation featuring the music of The Beatles. When Rosalind is banished from court, she disguises herself as a man and escapes to the forest. There, she meets the similarly-banished Orlando, who happens to be in love with her, but cannot see through her disguise. From there, things get increasingly tangled as the play explores love and gender roles, infused with the music of the "Fab Four."

What led to the pairing of Shakespeare with The Beatles?

Christopher Gaze [Artistic Director of Bard on The Beach in Vancouver] asked me: if, hypothetically, we could get the rights to the Beatles music, what would I do with it? I was always a big fan of the Beatles, considering the Beatles in relationship to *As You Like It*, I realized so much of their music feels like it was written for that play. It was such a perfect fit.

The journey of the characters in *As You Like It* really mirrors the evolution of The Beatles' songwriting. The beginning of *As You Like It* is about these young, naive lovers. And so all of the early Beatles stuff, like "I Wanna Hold Your Hand," fits in that so nicely. But then when Shakespeare's characters head out into the forest, it becomes a much deeper play that asks much deeper questions, so the later Beatles writing starts to really apply.

What was it like to weave The Beatles' Music into Shakespeare's script?

First, I knew I had to cut about half of Shakespeare's text. I wanted these songs to do more than pause the story for a second to sing your favourite Beatles song. They had to help move the story forward and they had to take the place of some monologues. So much of the process involved finding places where the emotional content of each song serves a purpose. I was asking myself, how do we replace what was in the text and help move the emotional journey forward?

Has this play changed how you see either Shakespeare or The Beatles?

Yes it has. While we're singing Beatles songs, we are placing them in the mouth of a particular character. So that totally sort of how we approach a song, or what lens we're looking at it through. A good example is "Helter Skelter," which is a pretty dark Beatles song. We use it late in the play as quite a comic number: Touchstone uses it to scare off William, peacocking as he shouts across the stage.

I have learned not to be precious about Shakespeare. I really enjoy ripping the guts out of it. I think this adaptation of *As You Like It* can really introduce audiences to Shakespeare. We build a lot on the humour and characters that Shakespeare wrote.

For example, he wrote a wrestling match into this play. One of the oddest things about *As You Like It* is that it has a wrestling match in the middle of it. We were able to build this full wrestling pre show that sets the tone for the night. The audience walks in and like, there's wrestling happening already, and they're like, what's happening, what's happening?

Tickets to *As You Like It* are now available at theatrecalgary.com

This production is made possible by the generous support of The Al Osten & Buddy Victor Legacy Fund.

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