HARTFORD STAGE

RAISE THE CURTAIN arts

# A COMMUNITY CAROL

**Opening Night: December 17, 2020**

**Streaming on demand: December 17–21**

HARTFORD STAGE

RAISE THE CURTAIN arts

# Help raise the curtain on the next chapter of our theatre's history!

## Hartford Stage Needs You.

Since 1964 Hartford Stage has been a place where we've gathered to be entertained and enriched. We've come together with family and friends, met neighbors in the lobby, and through the stories on our stage reconnected with our best selves, with each other, and with the world at large. In the coming year we will need our theatre more than ever. We'll need a place to come together and hear the stories that help shape our sense of the world and of each other. We will need to celebrate our community and our humanity. We will need Hartford Stage. And right now Hartford Stage needs you.

**Make a donation at hartfordstage.org**

MELIA BENSUSSEN
Artistic Director

CYNTHIA RIDER
Managing Director

HARTFORD STAGE

PRESENTS

# A COMMUNITY CAROL

A New Hartford Stage Adaptation of
CHARLES DICKENS' *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*

Collectively created in community

Director and Adaptor
RACHEL ALDERMAN

Video Designer
RASEAN DAVONTE JOHNSON

Sound Designer
PORNCHANOK KANCHANABANCA

Videographer
ALONZO BECKETT, NE VIDEO

Audio/Visual Coordinator
LUCAS CLOPTON

Assistant Director
ZOË GOLUB-SASS

Dramaturg
SALLY LOBEL

Production Manager
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General Manager
EMILY VAN SCOY

EXCLUSIVE PRESENTING SPONSOR

Raytheon Technologies

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DECEMBER 17–21, 2020

# Candles Flaring in the Windows

## How *A Christmas Carol* became *A Community Carol*

By Sally Lobel, Dramaturg

Source: Dickens, Charles. *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*. London: Chapman & Hall, 186, Strand, 1843, *Project Gutenberg*, www.gutenberg.org/files/46/46-h/46-h.htm.

In the opening pages of *A Christmas Carol*, we learn that Ebenezer Scrooge is not only greedy, but convinced he is utterly alone. And while we know him best for his lack of generosity, Scrooge is just as incapable of receiving gifts as he is of giving them, refusing to donate any amount of his considerable wealth and rejecting his nephew's annual invitation to a Christmas party in the space of an afternoon.

Even if he refuses to recognize it, the solitary Scrooge is surrounded by a vast and vibrant community. As he travels with the Spirits through London and beyond, he often passes by lighted windows where, inside, a multitude of lives are happening as holiday rituals are played out by townspeople, sailors, grocers, miners, and countless others.

This glimpse into community might explain why we return to this story year after year. Yes, *A Christmas Carol* is about a wealthy man's journey to redemption and generosity, but his transformation is not just personal – he finds that his choices impact everyone around him. He learns to be generous with his material wealth, but more importantly, he discovers how to live as a member of a community.

When it became clear that we wouldn't be able to gather at the theatre this holiday, we felt Scrooge's isolation more keenly than ever, and found comfort in his journey from solitude to community. With this in mind, we knew that our *Community Carol* could be an opportunity to connect, to find new ways to be together at a distance, with as many voices contributing to the story as possible.

We've spent the past months rediscovering the story with a vast variety of artists and partners zooming in to rehearsals or submitting creative contributions from various countries, states, and time-zones. No longer able to be in our rehearsal studios on Main Street, we could see into each other's homes, able to witness everyone's lives happening just outside the confines of their Zoom boxes.

Now, our community is about to expand again because you are joining us. Though we can't gather in person, we hope that you feel welcome to join us as you are from the comfort of your home, behind your lighted windows; to take what you need from this story, whether that be rest, comfort, or even a little bit of "Bah, humbug!" Dickens didn't shy away from darkness, and how joy and pain can coexist; the candle in the window and the darkness without.

*"In the main street…some labourers were repairing the gas-pipes, and had lighted a great fire… round which a party of ragged men and boys were gathered…. The brightness of the shops where holly sprigs and berries crackled in the lamp heat of the windows, made pale faces ruddy as they passed. Poulterers' and grocers' trades became a splendid joke: … even the little tailor… stirred up to-morrow's pudding in his garret, while his lean wife and the baby sallied out to buy the beef."*

## STAVE ONE

**ZOOM**

The returning Company of *A Christmas Carol – A Ghost Story of Christmas*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Vanessa R Butler* | Robert Hannon Davis* | Kenneth De Abrew* |
| Rebecka Jones* | Sarah Killough* | Shauna Miles* |
| John-Andrew Morrison* | Michael Preston* | Buzz Roddy* |
| Alan Rust* | Noble Shropshire* | Terrell Donnell Sledge* |

**THE COUNTING HOUSE:**

Scrooge/Cratchit/Fred *(Scrooge's Nephew)* ..... Shauna Miles*
Solicitor 1 ..... Rebecka Jones*
Solicitor 2 ..... Vanessa R Butler*

**MARLEY'S VISIT:**

Created by Dejé Bennett, Devé-Ann Bennett and Anne Cubberly
Marley Puppet by Anne Cubberly

Scrooge ..... Devé-Ann Bennett
Marley ..... Dejé Bennett

## STAVE TWO

**THE FIRST OF THE THREE SPIRITS**

Scrooge ..... Robert Hannon Davis*
Ghost of Christmas Past ..... Sarah Killough*
Fan (*Scrooge's Sister)* ..... Isabella Corica
Fezziwig ..... Michael Preston*
Mrs. Fezziwig ..... Barbara Karger
Fezziwig Community ..... Krizzia Cruz, Vivi Florez, Ashley Morgan, Manny Moura and Kai Straughn
Belle ..... Malena Gordo

## STAVE THREE

**THE SECOND OF THE THREE SPIRITS**

Scrooge ..... Buzz Roddy*
Ghost of Christmas Present ..... John-Andrew Morrison*
Mrs. Cratchit ..... Vanessa R Butler*
Cratchit ..... Alan Rust*
Fred (*Scrooge's Nephew)* ..... Terrell Donnell Sledge*
Fred's Wife ..... Rebecka Jones*

## STAVE FOUR

### THE LAST OF THE SPIRITS

Scrooge.....Nobel Shropshire*

**The Hartt School Ensemble**

Emma McKeen
Emily Dziob
Matthew Katsigianis
Jarrett Cordeiro
Liam Gerard
Rose Kortrey
Eddie Cruz, Jr.
Jack Robert Harding
Vilinda McGregor
Erin Proctor
Christopher Andrew Rowe
William Reilly
Dana Tortora

## STAVE FIVE

### THE END OF IT

Scrooge.....Kenneth De Abrew*
Turkey Kids.....Emma Billings and Ezra Mendes

**Youth Ensemble**

Emma Billings
Delia Canarie
Damien Galvez
Maxwell Kerz
Ezra Mendes
Alexander O'Brien
Shannen Penn
Camden Bouley
Isabella Corica
Samuel Grear
Michkael McKenzie
Andrew Michaels
Benjamin O'Brien
Meghan Pratt
Owen Bouley
Fred Faulkner
Addison Guarino
Ali McLarin
Princess-Larrine Moore
Addison Pancoast
Tessa Rosenfield
Fred Thornley IV
RJ Vercellone
Ava Vercellone
Anderson Wilder

**Breakdancing Shakespeare Dancers**

Eileen Cannon
Loren Milledge
Brandon Couloute
Travis Wrotten

**Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.*

## MUSIC

**All Through the Night**
Sung by Isabella Corica, Ava Vercellone, and Sarah Killough*

**Deck the Halls**
Soloists: Sarah Killough* and John-Andrew Morrison*

**It Came Upon A Midnight Clear**
Words written by Rev. Edmund Sears,
Pastor of the Unitarian Church of Wayland, Massachusetts in 1849
Performed by Rev. Cathy Rion Starr on cello
Rev. Heather Rion Starr on violin
Co-Ministers of the Unitarian Society of Hartford

**Agua de coco**
from the Diaz family's traditional Parranda
Performed by Marcelino (Chelo) Diaz Jr on cuatro
Marcelino Diaz III on guitar • Julio Diaz on güiro

**There is a Balm in Gilead**
Sung by Destini Stewart

**We Three Kings**
Arranged by ANDY BECK
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Sung by the Hartford Gay Men's Chorus

**Merry Everything**
Written by Ernie Lijoi
Sung by the Hartford Gay Men's Chorus

**Maoz Tzur**
Sung by Rabbi Donna Berman, Executive Director, Charter Oak Cultural Center

**Posada**
from Christ Church Cathedral's traditional Posada
Liturgy spoken by The Very Rev. Miguelina, Rev. Jorge Pallares, Melia Bensussen
Music performed by Pedro Cirilo Coral, Nelson Mena, and Alejandro Mena

## SPECIAL THANKS

The cast, crew and creatives of
*A Christmas Carol – A Ghost Story of Christmas*,
adapted by Michael Wilson

Capital Community College
The Hartt School at the University of Hartford
Katherine Lambert
The Society Room of Hartford & The Riverhouse at Goodspeed Station

Jasmin Agosto
The Alderman Family
Juanita Crispin
The Daly-Myrick Family
Laurie Dawn
Education @ Hartford Stage
Teaching Artists and Students
Hartford Public Library
Erin Keller
Wendy Kwalwasser

Julia Rosenblatt
Debbie Markowitz
Tina McKenna
Johanna Morrison
The Ortiz Family
Bill Raymond
Max Williams
Michael Wilson
The Families of our Youth Ensemble

We wish to express our gratitude to the Performers' Unions:
ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN GUILD OF MUSICAL ARTISTS
AMERICAN GUILD OF VARIETY ARTISTS
SAG-AFTRA
through Theatre Authority, Inc. for their cooperation in permitting the Artists to appear on this program.

## HARTFORD STAGE LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Hartford Stage acknowledges that Indigenous peoples and nations, including Mohegan, Mashantucket Pequot, Eastern Pequot, Schaghticoke, Golden Hill Paugussett, Niantic, and the Quinnipiac and other Algonquian speaking peoples, have stewarded through generations the lands and waterways of what is now the state of Connecticut. We honor and respect the enduring and continuing relationship that exists between these peoples and nations and this land.

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*Managing Director*

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