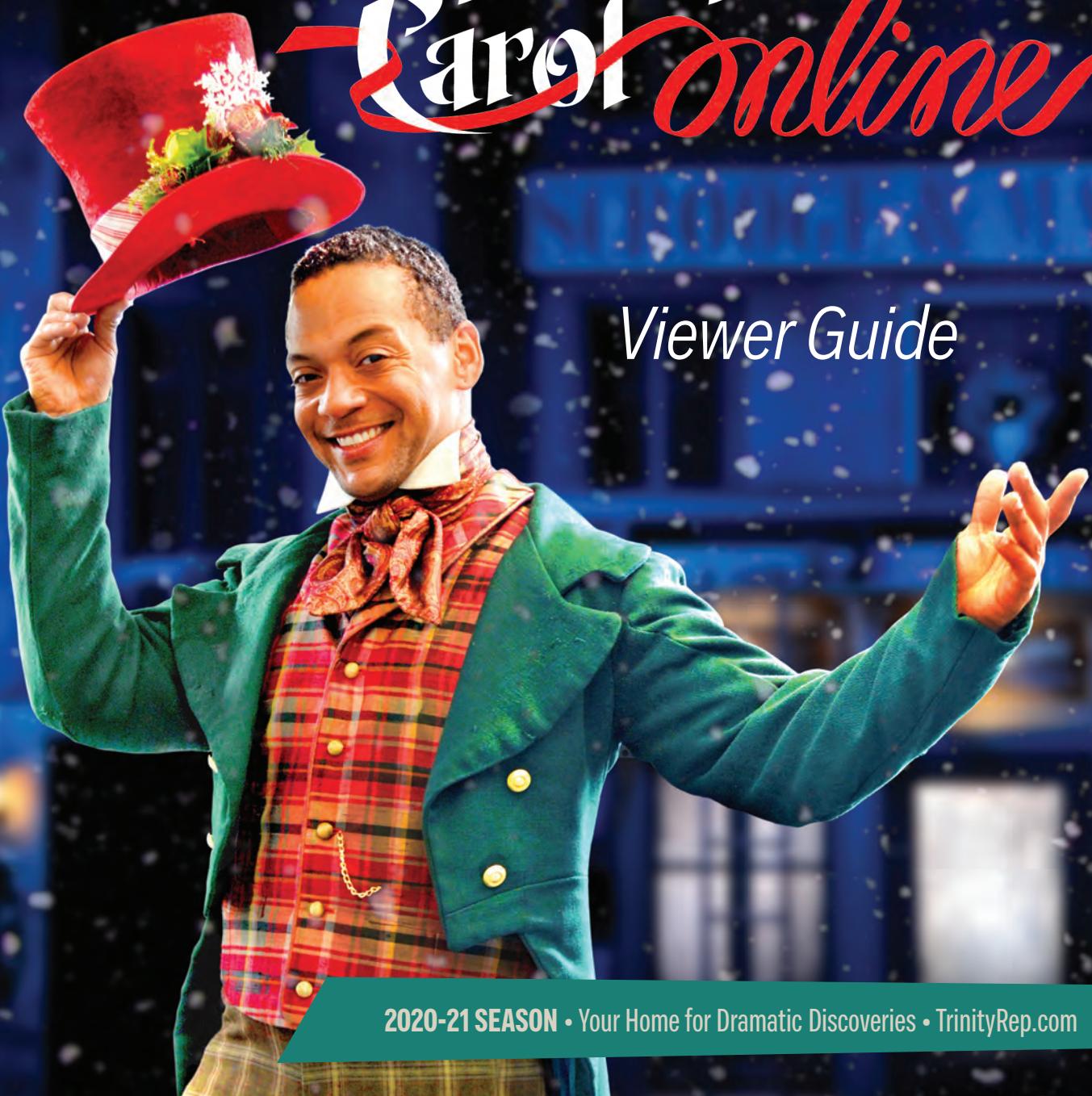


trinity rep

# A Christmas Carol

*online*

Viewer Guide



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presents a **TRINITY REPERTORY COMPANY** production

# A Christmas Carol online

Starring **JOE WILSON, JR.**

**DANIEL DUQUE-ESTRADA**  
**TAAVON GAMBLE**  
**REBECCA GIBEL**  
**STEPHEN THORNE**  
**RACHAEL WARREN**

*Director of Photography* **ALBERTO GENAO**

*Executive Producers* **TOM PARRISH**  
**LAURA E. SMITH**

*From the novella by* **CHARLES DICKENS**

*Adapted and Directed by* **CURT COLUMBUS**

Premiered December 17, 2020

**DEDICATED** to those whose lives have been lost due to the pandemic; to those whose livelihoods have been impacted, including those who lost their employment at Trinity Rep and throughout the theater industry; and to the healthcare and front line workers risking their lives to see us through to better days.

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## THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Adapted and Directed	CURT COLUMBUS
From the novella by	CHARLES DICKENS
Executive Producers	TOM PARRISH, LAURA E. SMITH
Director of Photography	ALBERTO GENAO
Editor	ALBERTO GENAO
Costume Designer	AMANDA DOWNING CARNEY
Music Composer	MICHAEL RICE
Music Composer "The Shepherd's Carol" and "Hey Ho"	RICHARD CUMMING
First Assistant Director	KRISTEN GIBBS
Choreographer	TAAVON GAMBLE
Set Decorator	S. MICHAEL GETZ
"A" Camera Operator	ALBERTO GENAO
1st Assistant Camera	MIGUEL MORILLO
2nd Assistant Camera/Translator	LEANDRO "KUFA" CASTRO
Sound Mixer	PETER SASHA HUROWITZ
Gaffer	STEVE MCLELLAN
Best Boy	ZACHARY J. REMSON
Property Master	S. MICHAEL GETZ
Props	ALYSSA KARNES
Set Dressers	ALYSSA KARNES
	MICHAEL McGARTY
	IAN STILLMAN
Costume Supervisor	ERIN MEGHAN DONNELLY
Still Photographers	AMANDA DOWNING CARNEY
	S. MICHAEL GETZ
	ANNE L. HARRIGAN
	LAURA E. SMITH
Sound Designer	PETER SASHA HUROWITZ
Illustrator/Animator	MICHAEL GUY
Health Officer/Lead COVID-19 Compliance Officer	ANNE L. HARRIGAN
COVID-19 Compliance Officer	LAURA E. SMITH
Health Screening Supervisor	KELLY McDONALD

**Screenplay Developmental Workshop Group:** Amanda Downing Carney, Curt Columbus, Daniel Duque-Estrada, Taavon Gamble, Alberto Genao, S. Michael Getz, Kristen Gibbs, Rebecca Gibel, Peter Sasha Hurowitz, Michael McGarty, Steve McLellan, Laura Smith, Ian Stillman, Stephen Thorne, Rachael Warren, Joe Wilson, Jr.

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## THE CAST (in order of appearance)

Spirit of Christmas	DANIEL DUQUE-ESTRADA‡
Ebenezer Scrooge	JOE WILSON, JR.‡
Herself	REBECCA GIBEL‡
Herself	RACHAEL WARREN‡
Himself	TAAVON GAMBLE
Fred, Nephew to Scrooge	RODNEY WITHERSPOON, II
Solicitor for the Poor	REBECCA GIBEL‡
Solicitor for the Poor	RACHAEL WARREN‡
Bob Cratchit	TAAVON GAMBLE
Jacob Marley	STEPHEN THORNE‡
The Ghost of Christmas Past	REBECCA GIBEL‡
The Ghost of Christmas Present	DANIEL DUQUE-ESTRADA‡
Topher	CHRISTOPHER LINDSAY
Lucy	JESSICA NATALIE SMITH
Sam Cratchit	ADAM CROWE
Tiny Tim	EVELYN MAROTE
Ignorance	LEANDER CARNEY
Want	TRISTAN CARNEY
Charwoman	REBECCA GIBEL‡
Old Joe	STEPHEN THORNE‡
Mrs. Dilber	RACHAEL WARREN‡
Himself	DANIEL DUQUE-ESTRADA‡
Himself	STEPHEN THORNE‡
Himself	JOE WILSON, JR.‡

‡ Trinity Rep Resident Acting Company member

## SPECIAL THANKS (in alphabetical order)

- Brown University
- City of Providence, RI • Peter and Ron Cardi • Russell Carey • Joe Carney • Rebecca Downing • Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce • Eugene Lee, Set Designer of *A Tale of Two Cities* • Marta V. Martinez, Artist-in-Residence • Mermaid Masterpieces • Bob Moniz • Ocean State Job Lot • Daniel Perkins, Sensory Friendly Consultant • Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau • Rhode Island Commerce Corporation • Rhode Island Community Food Bank • Rhode Island Film & Television Office • Rhode Island Foundation • Rhode Island Latino Arts • Rhode Island State Council on the Arts • James Rowan, Huron Consulting Group • St. Francis of Assisi Church and Cemetery (Wakefield, Rhode Island), Fr. Henry Bodah, Pastor • Town of South Kingstown, RI • Trinity Rep Health Advisory Committee: Elaine Desmarais, Louis Giancola, Eve Tucker Keenan, David Savitz, David Tomlinson

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No animals were harmed in the making of this production.





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Cover: Joe Wilson, Jr., costume by Amanda Downing Carney, image by Michael Guy

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Trinity Repertory Company



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# Join the Show

There will be moments during the show when you can interact with the video. The actors will tell you what to do when those moments arrive. To best prepare, you can gather the items in advance. If you choose to use only a few items, or none at all, that's OK, too!

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL PROPS LIST

- Pots and pans/wooden spoon
- A bell
- Bubbles
- A party hat or accessory to show holiday spirit
- Fezziwig's Punch (suggested recipes below)
- A candy cane
- An orange

## FEZZIWIG'S PUNCH: THE AT-HOME RECIPE

• **With alcohol:** Equal parts Champagne, Prosecco (or your favorite sparkling wine), and cranberry juice cocktail. Add a splash of Grand Marnier, Triple Sec, or Cointreau.

• **Non-alcoholic:** Equal parts ginger ale and cranberry juice cocktail with a splash of orange juice.



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# How to Watch *A Christmas Carol* Online

## FAQ

See below for answers to the most frequently asked questions about this production. A more complete FAQ guide can be found online at [trinityrep.com/faq](http://trinityrep.com/faq). If your question is not answered on these pages or online, please email [boxoffice@trinityrep.com](mailto:boxoffice@trinityrep.com) or call (401) 351-4242.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Box Office is able to answer general questions but may not be able to troubleshoot your specific technical situation. The Box Office is open Monday – Thursday, 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm EST. Trinity Rep will be closed beginning at 4:00 pm on December 23, re-opening at 9:00 am on January 4, to allow our staff time to celebrate the holidays and take a much-needed rest.

## GET STARTED: REGISTRATION & GENERAL INFO

**How do I sign up? Where do I get the link?** Click the REGISTER FOR FREE ACCESS button at [trinityrep.com/carol](http://trinityrep.com/carol). On a desktop or laptop computer, this will be on the right side of the screen beneath the image of Ebenezer Scrooge. On a phone or tablet, you will see this button at the bottom of the screen.

Select "1" for the number of tickets. You will only need one link per household, no matter how many people will be watching the show.

Enter your name and contact information and complete the checkout process.

You will receive a confirmation email with your link. Your link will also be sent out in a separate email a few days before the video premieres. We will also resend the link to those who have not yet started watching the show before the viewing window closes on January 10. If you do

not receive a confirmation email within a few minutes, check your junk/spam folder.

**When can I watch the show? How many times can I watch the show?** The 2020 production will be released at 12:00 pm EST (noon) on December 17, 2020 and will be available through 11:59 pm EST on January 10, 2021. Between these dates, the video can be watched at any time, and as many times as you want.

**Can I share this link with family and friends?** Yes, your link will work if it is shared with others, BUT there are a few factors to consider when doing so. If you would like to share with your friends and family, **we recommend each household register separately**. Here's why:

Your link will only work on one device at a time, so you cannot watch it at the same time as a friend on separate devices if you are sharing a link. You can do that if you each have your own link. If you are using the same link, whoever logs on last will be the only person able to view the show. Notifications including access to bonus content and reminders to watch will only be sent to the people who have registered for the link.

**What age is the show appropriate for?** We made this show with all ages in mind. Remember, however, that it is a ghost story. Our Sensory Friendly guide will have specific information about moments that could be alarming for young children or those with sensory processing disorders. When the Sensory Friendly guide is ready, it will be posted on [trinityrep.com/carol](http://trinityrep.com/carol).

**Will there be captions?** Yes. While watching the video, you can turn on captions in English or Spanish, or leave them off.

**I am a teacher. Can I watch this with my class?** Yes! Teachers should use the school registration link at [trinityrep.com/faq](http://trinityrep.com/faq) instead of through the regular process. Using the education registration process will allow you to get a special link that allows more than one device to view the video at the same time. This is imperative if your students are watching on individual devices at home or in class.

This also opens up access to a digital study guide to connect what your students are seeing with common core standards.

## GET READY TO WATCH

**Where is my link?** Your link is included in your confirmation email. The subject line of this email is "Your order has been submitted" and was sent from [boxoffice@trinityrep.com](mailto:boxoffice@trinityrep.com). It will also be sent in a follow-up email in mid-December, late December, and early January from [communications@trinityrep.com](mailto:communications@trinityrep.com). If you do not receive an email within a few minutes, check your junk/spam folder.

**Do I need to do gather anything before I watch?** There will be moments during the show when you can interact with the video. The actors will tell you what to do when those moments arrive. To best prepare, you can gather the items in advance. If you choose to use only a few items, or none at all, that's OK, too!

### **A Christmas Carol Props:**

- Pots and pans/wooden spoon
- A bell
- Bubbles
- A party hat or accessory to show your holiday spirit
- Fezziwig's Punch (see below)
- A candy cane
- An orange

### **Fezziwig's Punch Recipes:**

- With alcohol: Equal parts Champagne, Prosecco, or your favorite sparkling wine and cranberry juice cocktail. Add a splash of Grand Marnier, Triple Sec, or Cointreau
- Non-alcoholic: Equal parts ginger ale and cranberry juice cocktail with a splash of orange juice.

## **Can I watch with family and friends?**

The holidays are more fun when sharing them with the ones we love. This year's online production makes it easier to share the experience with family and friends no matter where they live. Try a virtual watch party!

Have each household register for their own link to the show. (This is important if you intend to watch at the same time from different devices.) Pick a date and show time that works for everyone.

Use one computer or mobile device to watch the show and another to call (or video conference with) others in your group if you'd like to talk to each other about what you're seeing and hear their reactions. For a phone call, put your phone on speaker in a central spot in the room.

We recommend that everyone test their connection, device set up, etc. prior to the appointed time.

Please stay safe! We recommend limiting your in-person viewing parties to the people in your household and use virtual communication options to include others. Please follow the guidelines issued by the CDC and your local government officials to prevent COVID-19 transmission, including mask-wearing, social distancing, and hand washing.

## **Do I have to watch the whole show once I start it?**

No. You can pause and resume it when you're ready — whether that is in a few minutes or a few days. Or rewind and watch your favorite section over and over. If you resume watching during a different viewing session (i.e. you have to click the link again and not just un-pause), the video will start from the beginning.

## **GET READY TO WATCH: TECHNICAL SET UP**

**Where do I watch?** The video must be watched through an internet browser. We recommend Chrome and Firefox. Some have reported problems with Internet Explorer and Microsoft Edge.

It is not available on Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, or other streaming platforms. It is also not available through satellite, broadcast, or cable television.

## **What device can I use to watch the video?**

You can watch the show on an internet-connected computer or mobile device like a phone or tablet. If you have a Smart TV that allows you to access the internet, you can connect directly on the television. You can also connect your computer to your television or "cast" from a device to your television. See below for specific instructions.

Note that your link only enables streaming on one device at a time. If you start viewing on your tablet and then switch to your laptop, the stream will be available only on the laptop and no longer on the tablet. If you wish to view on multiple devices simultaneously, you will need to register multiple times to receive different viewing links.

### **How do I watch on my television?**

There are several options for connecting to your television. Once you have selected a method, we recommend testing it out prior to viewing the show.

More information and links with more details for each option below can be found at [www.trinityrep.com/faq](http://www.trinityrep.com/faq).

### **OPTION 1: Connecting directly from an iPad, laptop, or desktop computer, using an HDMI cable**

If your television has an HDMI port, you can use an HDMI cable to hook up your device directly to your television. You may also need an HDMI adapter. HDMI cables and adapters can be purchased online, or at Best Buy, office supply stores such as Staples and Office Depot, or department stores such as Target and Costco. Some Dollar Stores may also carry them.

### **OPTION 2: Using Apple AirPlay/screen mirroring**

If you are using an Apple device, you may be able to use AirPlay or AppleTV to broadcast the performance on your television.

### **OPTION 3: Using Chromecast**

If you are using Google Chrome on Android devices, Chromebooks, or other PC devices or computers, you may be able to use Chromecast to broadcast the

performance on your television.

### **OPTION 4: Using Your Smart TV**

If you own a Smart TV, you may be able to browse directly on your television.

### **How do I get just the video on my screen?**

To put the video in full screen mode, hover over the video and you will see the icons for pause, full screen, and volume. Click the full screen icon.

To return to the minimized view with text beneath the video window and the form on the right-hand side of the screen, press the Escape key on a computer or back button on a mobile device.

### **Something's not right. I'm having technical difficulties.**

Our Box Office is available from Monday through Thursday, 12:00 – 4:00 pm EST at [boxoffice@trinityrep.com](mailto:boxoffice@trinityrep.com) or (401) 351-4242. Trinity Rep will be closed beginning at 4:00 pm on December 23, re-opening at 9:00 am on January 4.

The Box office will be able to provide general instructions but may not be able to troubleshoot your specific circumstances.

### **Trouble shooting tips:**

- Does your device have power/full charge?
  - Is someone else trying to use the same viewing link? If so, register for your own link so you can both watch at the same time.
  - Can't find your link? See the "Where is my link?" answer above.
  - Is the date between December 17 and January 10? Those are the only dates the video is available.
  - Having trouble connecting to your TV? Try the links above.
- If you are experiencing any of the following, the problem is likely your internet connection, which we will not be able to help with, unfortunately:
  - Your video is buffering
  - Your video is constantly loading
  - Your video is choppy
  - Your video is constantly freezing.



## Remember Having Fun?

Let's face it, we all need a little more joy. It's time to shake off the winter blues, quell our weary wanderlust, and hit the road (or, um, "Rhode"). Visit **JoyRidesRI.com** to design the perfect route through Rhode Island for food, fun, and all sorts of adventures. Pack your overnighter, put on your mask, and fill up the tank. It's time for a joy ride!

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## WHO'S WHO

### LEANDER & TRISTAN CARNEY

*Ignorance and Want*



Leander and Tristan Carney are BEYOND thrilled to be in *A Christmas Carol Online* and would like to thank Mr. Curt for this opportunity. The boys attend 4th and 3rd grade at Peace Dale Elementary in South Kingstown and are in the Spanish-English Dual Language Immersion curriculum. When the brothers aren't onstage with RI Youth Theatre or taking theater camp with the wondrous Chelsea Cook, they are building with Lego and Minecraft, hiking, or riding bikes. In addition, Lee trains in karate and T has fallen in love with surfing. While theater is paused they both keep busy with online work and have been recently featured in RIPCA's PSA commercial "Keep off the Grass" and a grand prize winning One-Wheel video contest entry. They wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season!

### ADAM CROWE

*Sam Cratchit, Husband to Bob Cratchit*



Adam has spent the better part of the last two decades performing, managing, and finally producing at Theatre by the Sea in Matunuck as well as operating his family's restaurants scattered throughout Southern Rhode Island.

### DANIEL DUQUE-ESTRADA‡

*Spirit of Christmas The Ghost of Christmas Present, Himself*



**Trinity Rep:** Sydney Carton, *A Tale of Two Cities*; Abel, *Fade*; Pablo Del Valle, *Native Gardens*; Lodovico, *Othello*; Alonso/King Ferdinand of Aragon, *Like Sheep to Water*, or

*Fuente Ovejuna*; Lysander, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *A Christmas Carol*.

**Off-Broadway:** WP Theater, Second Stage, PlayCo. **Other Theaters:** Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Dallas Theater Center (former Brierly Resident Acting Co. member), Shakespeare Dallas, Brown/Trinity Playwrights Rep, California Shakespeare Theater, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, The Shotgun Players, Intersection for the Arts/Campo Santo, The Cutting Ball Theater. **TV:** *Second Chance*. **Other:** Daniel has been a counselor and teaching artist with Trinity Rep's Young Actor's Summer Institute. Graduate of the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA Acting program; BA from UC Berkeley.

### TAAVON GAMBLE

*Himself, Bob Cratchit*



**Trinity Rep:** Charles Darnay, *A Tale of Two Cities*; Jacob Marley, *A Christmas Carol* 2019; *Little Shop of Horrors*; *Ragtime*; *Oklahoma!* **Tour:** *Seussical*.

**Regional:** North Shore Music Theatre, Speakeasy Stage Company, Greater Boston Stage Company, Ivoryton Playhouse, Greater Boston Stage Company, Lyric Stage Company, Theatre By The Sea, New Bedford Festival Theatre, West Virginia Public Theatre, The Hanover Theatre, Baltimore Shakespeare Festival, Reagle Music Theatre, Quantum Theatre. Training: Point Park University. **Other:** Two-time IRNE nominee. Taavon has been a teaching artist with Trinity Rep's Young Actor's Summer Institute (YASI) program and joins faculty of the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA program this spring teaching musical theater dance.

### REBECCA GIBEL‡

*Herself, Solicitor for the Poor, The Ghost of Christmas Past, Charwoman*



**Trinity Rep:** A company member since 2013: Lucie Manette, *A Tale of Two Cities*; Sheila Cianci, *The Prince of Providence*; Audrey, *Little Shop of Horrors*; Lizzy, *Pride and Prejudice*; Evelyn Nesbit, *Ragtime*; Desdemona, *Othello*; Poppy, *Faithful Cheaters*; Hermia, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Ado Annie, *Oklahoma!*; *To Kill a Mockingbird*; *Blues for Mister Charlie*;

Frances, *Melancholy Play: a chamber musical*; Corie Bratter, *Barefoot in the Park*; Anna, Ivanov; Sally, *A Lie of the Mind*; Mrs. Smith, *Social Creatures*; Gloria, *Boeing-Boeing*; Guenevere, *Camelot*; Cecily, *The Importance of Being Earnest*. **Other Theaters:** Huntington Theater Company, Cleveland Play House, Arden Theatre Company, Actors Theatre of Louisville, ArtsEmerson, Intiman Theatre, Capital Rep, Fiasco Theater/McCarter Theatre, Fault Line Theatre, company member at The Williams Project. **TV/Film:** *Blue Bloods*, *Castle Rock*, *American Woman*, *NOS4A2*, *Spenser Confidential*, *Law & Order: SVU*, and *The Plot Against America*. **Other:** MFA in Acting, Brown/Trinity Rep; IRNE Award Nomination: Best Actress in a Musical; *Denver Post Readers' Choice Award*. [www.rebeccagibel.com](http://www.rebeccagibel.com)

### CHRISTOPHER LINDSAY

*Topher*



**Trinity Rep:** understudy Marley/Topper, *A Christmas Carol* 2019.

**Brown/Trinity Rep:** Nick, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* **Other Theaters:** Ferdinand, *The Tempest*, Stokely Carmichael, *The Parchman Hour*, Fred/Mr.

Caroline, *A Christmas Carol*, Virginia Stage Company; Oshoosi Size, *The Brother's Size*, Balzer Theatre at Herren's; Asagai, *A Raisin in the Sun*, Cloverdale Playhouse. **Education:** Christopher is a third-year student in the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA Acting program. He has a BA from Norfolk State University in Theater. **Awards/Other:** Charter Member of Norfolk State University Alpha Theta Kappa Chapter of Alpha Psi Omega National Theatre Honor Society, 2016 KCACTF Most Distinguished Actor in a Play, 2016 KCACTF Most Distinguished Performance and Production Ensemble.

### EVELYN MAROTE

*Tiny Tim*



Evelyn is thrilled to be making her acting debut in the 2020 production of *A Christmas Carol* at Trinity Rep! Evelyn is 7 years old and in the first grade. She enjoys ballet class and being with her family. Evelyn wants to thank her uncles

(Adam Crowe and Taavon Gamble) for this wonderful opportunity!

## JESSICA NATALIE SMITH

*Lucy*



**Trinity Rep:** Understudy for Lizzy and Jane, *Pride and Prejudice*. **Brown/Trinity Rep:** Nice, good god; Ariel, *The Tempest*; Kurosawa 4, *Akira*

*Kurosawa Explains His Movies and Yogurt...; Mrs. Winemiller/Bassett, Summer and Smoke.*

**Other Theaters:** Featured Artist, 2020 Broadway Gala, 24 Hour Plays; Laertes, *Hamlet*, The Gallery Players; Shayla, *Shayla and the Magic Paintbrush*, The Hangar Theatre Lab; Actor 1, *Tidwell or the Plantation Play*, Samuel French OOB. **Other:** Jessica is an actress, director, and choreographer from Riverside, CA. She received her BFA in acting from North Carolina A&T State University. A third year in the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA Acting program, Jessica recently directed a film adaptation of *Aftermath* by Mary P. Burrill. For more information about her work, please visit jessicanataliesmith.com

## STEPHEN THORNE ‡

*Jacob Marley, Old Joe, Himself*



**Trinity Rep:** This is Mr. Thorne's 21st season. Favorite roles include: Orin, *Little Shop of Horrors*; Iago, *Othello*; Harry Houdini, *Ragtime*; Atticus, *To Kill a Mockingbird*; Tom Joad,

*The Grapes of Wrath*; Homer Wells, *The Cider House Rules*; John Proctor, *The Crucible*; Arthur, *Camelot*; Hamlet; Stephen, *The Long Christmas Ride Home*; Hal/Henry V, *The Henriad*; Matt, *The Fantasticks*; Heisenberg, *Copenhagen*; Quango, *Homebody/Kabul*; Garry, *Noises Off*. In 2017, he co-directed *A Christmas Carol*. **Other Theaters:** Actors Theatre of Louisville, Long Wharf Theatre, and Riverside Shakespeare Festival. He has been a member of the Bread Loaf School of English Acting Ensemble since 1999. **Other:** Stephen is the author of two plays: *The Completely Fictional — Utterly True — Final Strange Tale of Edgar Allan Poe* and *Veronica Meadows*.

## RACHAEL WARREN ‡

*Herself, Solicitor for the Poor, Mrs. Dilber*



**Trinity Rep:** Since 2000: Madame Defarge, *A Tale of Two Cities*; Voice of the Plant, *Little Shop of Horrors*; Darcy/Wickham, *Pride and Prejudice*; Mother, *Ragtime*; Grace Richards, *Into the Breeches!*; Puck, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Warrior One, *Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage*; Laurey, *Oklahoma!*; *To Kill a Mockingbird*; Portia, *Julius Caesar*; Tilly, *Melancholy Play: a chamber musical*; Nancy, *Oliver!*; Sally, *Cabaret*; Eliza, *My Fair Lady*; Betsy/Lindsey, *Clybourne Park*; *Songs of Innocence*, *Songs of Experience*; Ophelia, *Hamlet*; Wendy, *Peter Pan*; Rebecca, *The Long Christmas Ride Home*; Sabina, *The Skin of Our Teeth*; Lady Percy/Katherine, *The Henriad*; Mary, *Dublin Carol*; Mary Warren, *The Crucible*; Truvy, *Steel Magnolias*.

**National Tours:** *Tommy, Chess, Company*.

**Other Theaters:** Alison, *Fun Home*, Wilbury Theatre Group; Oregon Shakespeare Festival; A.R.T.; Actors Theatre of Louisville; Cleveland Play House; Williamstown; Hartford Stage; Goodspeed Opera; The Wallis Annenberg Center; Virginia Stage.

**Other:** Rachael is a graduate of the A.R.T. Institute at Harvard and Illinois-Wesleyan University, and on the faculty of the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA Program.

## JOE WILSON, JR. ‡

*Ebenezer Scrooge, Himself*



**Trinity Rep:** In 15 seasons, plays include: August Wilson's *Radio Golf*, *The Prince of Providence*, *Marisol*, *The Song of Summer*, *black odyssey* (co-director and the role of Ulysses), *The Mountaintop, Oklahoma!* (IRNE Award), *Julius Caesar*, *Intimate Apparel*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Clybourne Park*, *Camelot*, *Yellowman*, *Cabaret*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *A Christmas Carol*, *All The King's Men*, *The Fantasticks*, *Cherry Orchard*, *Topdog/Underdog* (IRNE Award), *Ain't Misbehavin'* (IRNE Award), *Hamlet*. **Broadway:** *Iceman Cometh* (2018 Tony Nominated Best Revival) starring Denzel Washington, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (2000 Tony Nominated Best Revival). **Off-Broadway:** *Little Ham* and

*Josephine's Song*. **Regional:** Huntington, Penumbra, North Shore Music Theatre, Alliance, McCarter, Syracuse Stage, Guthrie, Ordway Music Theatre, Children's Theatre Company, New Rep, and American Players.

**Other:** MFA, Univ. of Minnesota/Guthrie; BA, Notre Dame. Joe and Trinity Rep participated in the Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowships, funded by the William & Eva Fox Foundation and administered by Theatre Communications Group. He is on the board of the Manton Avenue Project, the South Side Cultural Center in Providence, RI, and The Center for Reconciliation.

## RODNEY WITHERSPOON, II

*Fred, Nephew to Scrooge*



**Trinity Rep:** *Romeo and Juliet*, Teatro en El Verano with RI Latino Arts; *Pride and Prejudice*, understudy. **Other**

**Theaters:** Vineyard Theatre (NY); Berkeley Repertory Company (CA); Commonwealth Shakespeare Company (MA); Mixed Magic Theatre (RI); Wilbury Theatre Group (RI); ART Station (GA); Marietta's New Theatre in the Square (GA); and Atlanta Actors Equity (GA). **Other:** Rodney is an actor, writer, and teaching artist. He is a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley and is a third-year student in the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA Acting program. His short play, *Tidwell, or the Plantation Play*, is published in Samuel French's *Off Off Broadway Festival Plays: 44th Series*.

## CURT COLUMBUS

*Adaptor and Director*



Curt Columbus became Trinity Repertory Company's fifth artistic director in January 2006. He is also the artistic director of the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA programs in Acting and Directing. His directing credits for Trinity Rep include *Macbeth*, *Ragtime*, *Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage*, *Middletown*, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *His Girl Friday*, *Camelot*, *Cabaret*, *Blithe Spirit*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Cherry Orchard*, and the world premieres of *The Completely Fictional—Utterly True—Final*

*Strange Tale of Edgar Allan Poe and Social Creatures.* Trinity Rep has been home to the world premieres of three of his plays, *Paris by Night*, *The Dreams of Antigone*, and *Sparrow Grass*, and produced his translations of Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard* and *Ivanov*, as well as Feydeau's *A Flea in Her Ear* and Lope de Vega's *Like Sheep to Water*, or *Fuente Ovejuna*. Curt's adaptation of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (with Marilyn Campbell) has won awards and accolades around the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. His translation of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, developed at the Arden Theatre in Philadelphia, is published by Dramatists Play Service, as is *Sparrow Grass* and his translations of Chekhov's *Seagull*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Cherry Orchard*, and *Ivanov*, as well as Lope de Vega's *Fuente Ovejuna*. Curt lives in Providence, Rhode Island with his husband, Nate Watson.

**TOM PARRISH**  
*Executive Producer*



Leading Trinity Rep since 2015, Tom Parrish is responsible for overall audience and donor development, financial management, operations, and administration. Previously, he served successful tenures as executive director of Geva Theatre Center and Merrimack Repertory Theatre. He also worked at Arena Stage, Cleveland Play House, Dallas Theater Center, and San Diego Repertory Theatre. He is currently Treasurer of the League of Resident Theatres and involved on the boards or committees of Theatre Forward, Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Providence District Management Authority, Providence Foundation, and the Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau. Awards include a NAACP Theatre Award for Best Producer and "Forty Under 40" recognition in Providence, Rochester, the Merrimack Valley, and San Diego. He received his MBA/MA, Arts Administration from Southern Methodist University; BA in Theater Arts and Economics from Case Western Reserve University; and attended the National Theater Institute, Commercial Theater Institute, and Harvard Business School's Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management.

**LAURA E. SMITH**  
*Executive Producer*



Ms. Smith is in her 24th season with Trinity Rep. She was the associate production manager at Trinity Rep for six years and the capital projects manager for two years, overseeing the construction of the Pell Chafee Performance Center. In the past, she has been the production manager for the Department of Theatre, Speech and Dance at Brown University and the Berkshire Opera Company. She has also stage managed for institutions such as the Metropolitan Opera, the New York Philharmonic, and the Juilliard School.

**ALBERTO GENAO**  
*Director of Photography/Editor*



Alberto Genao is a Dominican-American filmmaker who breathes for the creative process of film. With extensive experience in pre-production to post-production, Alberto has worked with large production companies and small crews, always adding his passion for the craft. Genao has worked with non-profit organizations like Rhode Island Latino Arts (RILA), Groundwork Rhode Island, Providence Housing Authority, and Zero Waste Providence. One of Genao's first collaborations with Trinity Rep was creating a short film for *Romeo Y Julieta* 2018 to celebrate the Teatro en El Verano summer series with Trinity Rep and RILA. Genao's also produced a beautiful showcase of the 2019 *Tanta Bulla... ¿Y Pa' Qué?* cast at the WaterFire Basin stage showcasing the beautiful city of Providence. Genao has produced over 30 music videos and is currently working on numerous exciting video projects with the Providence artist community.

**AMANDA DOWNING CARNEY**  
*Costume Designer*

Amanda Downing Carney is Trinity Rep's costume shop director and the costume designer for *Fade* and *An Iliad*. Her responsibilities include overseeing practical costume logistics and enabling the designer's artistic visions for each production. She started as

a stitcher/wardrobe here 13 years ago after returning home to Rhode Island from a life on the road as a wardrobe supervisor and costume coordinator for multiple national tours. In addition to her full-time gig at Trinity Rep, she designs costumes for local universities and theaters including: Brown/Trinity Rep, URI, PC, The Gamm Theatre, Wilbury Theatre Group, Contemporary Theatre Co., and The White Heron Theatre on Nantucket. She has also designed for Trinity Rep's Teatro en El Verano tours of *Romeo and Juliet*, *La Tempestad*, and *Much Ado/Tanta Bulla*. Amanda has a BFA in Costume Technology from URI and lives in South County with her husband Joe and two young sons.

**MICHAEL RICE**  
*Music Composer*

Trinity Rep credits include *Ragtime*, *Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage*, *Oklahoma!*, *Oliver!*, *Paris by Night*, *Cabaret*, *Camelot*, and *A Christmas Carol*. Recent highlights include two productions of *1776*, directed by Frank Galati. As a composer/lyricist, Rice adapted a version of Brecht's *The Good Woman of Setzuan* (Samuel French) with Eric Bentley, and composed the musical *American Beauty*, written with Jack Heifner, Romulus Linney and others, which has been produced throughout the country. His newest musical drama, *During Wind and Rain*, written with librettist Margaret Jones Bolsterli, premiered last spring at Little Rock's Argenta Theatre. He is musical supervisor for the new Danny Goggin musical, *Johnny Manhattan*. Thanks to Andrew Smithson.

**KRISTEN GIBBS**  
*First Assistant Director*

**Trinity Rep:** This is Ms. Gibbs' 14th season with Trinity Rep! Some favorite shows include *Cabaret*, *A Christmas Carol* (2017), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. **Off-Broadway:** The Public Theater (15 productions over the past eight seasons, including Shakespeare in the Park, the Mobile Shakespeare Unit, the Public Works initiative, and Joe's Pub; most recently Public Works' musical adaptation of Disney's *Hercules*); Playwrights Horizons; MCC Theater. **Other Theaters:** NY Stage and Film Powerhouse Theater, The Gamm Theatre, Theatre By The Sea, Brown/Trinity Rep MFA Program. **Other:** Kristen is a Rhode Island native, thrilled to be back at Trinity Rep after seeing her first show here many years ago!

## **TAAVON GAMBLE**

### **Choreographer**

**Trinity Rep:** *A Christmas Carol* 2019.

**New York:** *The Color Purple* (NY Regional Premiere), *Hair* at WPPAC, *Blood Wedding* with Second Skin Productions. **Direction/**

**Choreography:** *Pippin*, Jean's Playhouse; *A Chorus Line*, *The Addams Family*, *All Shook Up*, Arundel Barn Playhouse; *West Side Story*, *Spamalot*, Chicago, *Guys and Dolls*, *The Music Man*, *The Wedding Singer*, Bigfork Summer Playhouse; *Seussical*, Pittsburgh Playhouse; *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, Brown University; *Legally Blonde*, Bryant University. **Other:** Taavon teaches musical theater and dance for Trinity Rep's Young Actor's Summer Institute (YASI) and joins faculty of the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA program this spring teaching musical theater dance.

## **S. MICHAEL GETZ**

### **Set Decorator/Property Master**

Michael Getz has been the properties master for Trinity Rep for the past 25 seasons. His day-to-day responsibilities include shopping and building the props, furniture, and set dressing for all Trinity Rep mainstage productions, as well as maintaining all current productions. He also lends support to the education, marketing, and development departments when things are needed for outside projects or special events. Originally from Pennsylvania, Michael first moved to New England to work at the Ogunquit Playhouse (America's Foremost Summer Theatre) and StageWest (Springfield, MA). He is a graduate of Mansfield University of Pennsylvania, with a B.A. in general and technical theater. Michael also has an Associate's Degree in Interior Design.

## **MIGUEL MORILLO**

### **1st Assistant Camera Operator**

Miguel Morillo is a Dominican/Bostonian creative content creator, stylist, proud Raw Art Works graduate, RAW teacher, and founder of Star Struk media production, which focuses on photography, graphic design, and marketing. Morillo has worked as part of Genao Films since 2018.

## **LEANDRO "KUFA" CASTRO**

### **2nd Assistant Camera Operator/Translator**

Leandro Castro, better known by his stage name "Kufa Castro," is a Dominican artist based in the city of Pawtucket, RI. Canta Author, poet, and playwright, he has

produced a discography of three musical albums in collaboration with his musical producer "Blind Genius" Emmanuel Batista: *Gafa Oscura Vol. 1* (2010); *Gafa Oscura Vol. 2* (2011); and *Lo Bueno Y lo Malo* (2014). He has translated and adapted for Trinity Rep and Rhode Island Latino Arts' Teatro en El Verano project for the past three years, including *Tanta Bulla... ¿Y Pa' Qué?* (2019), *La Tempestad* (2018); and Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors/Ahi no! La Comedia de las Equivocaciones* (2018), directed by Tatyana Marie Carlo, for the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA program. Kufa fuses his history and experience as an Afro Latino in the United States in his music and poetry. He is currently continuing to expand his creative faces in areas of performance and writing.

## **PETER SASHA HUROWITZ**

### **Sound Mixer/Resident Sound Designer**

Peter Hurowitz has designed the sound for more than 80 productions at Trinity Rep, including recent productions of *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Ragtime*; *Like Sheep to Water*, or *Fuente Ovejuna*; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *A Christmas Carol*; and *Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage*. This is his 24th season with the company, where he serves as sound engineer. This past summer, he designed the sound for *Cymbeline* for Commonwealth Shakespeare Company.

## **STEVE MCLELLAN**

### **Gaffer/Lighting Designer**

Recent lighting design credits include: *Admissions*, JQA, *The Night Watch*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Winter's Tale*, Gamm Theatre; *Stupid F\*\*king Bird*, Detroit, Wilbury Theatre

Group; *Harold and Maude*, *Seven Keys to Baldpate*, *Sylvia*, *Dangerous Corner*, *2nd Story* Theatre; *Batboy*, *Spelling Bee*, Providence College. Steve is a graduate of the Dean College Theatre Arts program and is currently the Master Electrician at Trinity Repertory Company.

## **MICHAEL GUY**

### **Illustrator/Animator**

Michael Guy is the Creative Director in Trinity Rep's marketing department, as well as the archivist for the theater. Originally from Colorado, Michael has worked at Trinity Rep since graduating in 1975 from the Rhode Island School of Design, initially as receptionist and later as scenic charge artist and props artisan before moving into graphic design in 1980. He also created the mural which enlivened the Chace lobby from 1983 through 2015. Additionally, Michael is a painter and furniture maker who has exhibited around the country. He created costumes and performed in Brian Jones' *All-Tap Revues* and Adam Bock's *Gayboy Nutcrackers*, and from 1987 to 2005, Michael was the volunteer managing director and designer for *Options*, Rhode Island's monthly LGBTQ newsmagazine.

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"*Silent Night*" written by Joseph Mohr & Franz Gruber, performed by Michelle Cruz

**BELOW:** Filming Joe Wilson, Jr. for *A Christmas Carol* Online in Trinity Rep's Chace Theater. Photo by Amanda Downing Carney.



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**Thank you**

to Trinity Repertory Theatre for this very special production of a Christmas Carol.

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# A Conversation with the Director Curt Columbus

**Natalie Dreyer:** You directed *A Christmas Carol* before. What do you like about getting to revisit this text?

**Curt Columbus:** So I've directed it twice before, and I've been involved in every production since I've been here, so that's 15 productions. Which is a lot of *A Christmas Carol*. I have to say, Natalie, this year more than any other year, we need this story. We did the workshop in September with the actors, which was a wonderful experience. When we got to the end of our script work and we read the whole script together, everyone was crying because it's like we really need this story. We need to figure out how to have hope in a time when it seems like we're really on the edge of the grave, if you will. So, this story becomes more urgent depending on when you live. Sometimes, it's just a really sweet story about the redemption of one person, and sometimes, *A Christmas Carol* can be about where you are in the world. I think it's the latter right now.

**ND:** You mentioned the workshop process, could you tell us a little bit about how you approached adapting this production to a video format and what have been some of the challenges of directing this online?

**CC:** Adapting the script is something that we do every year. We rework it for the artists who are involved, for the moment we're in, for the way the story is residing with us, for the community groups who might be involved. Adapting wasn't the challenge. The challenge was twofold.

One is how do we make what's great about Trinity Rep's *A Christmas Carol*, which is the connection between the audience and the artist, right? How do we make that resonate in an adaptation. How do we make the new media production something that's interactive? It was Danny Duque-Estrada who on the very first day of the workshop said, "I'm thinking this should be interactive," and my heart sank a little bit. He continued, "I think we need a scavenger hunt list" and I went "Oh! Yes, without question, that's what we need." So the challenge is to make it feel like you're in an interactive event, and then the other challenge is that it's COVID and we can't have actors in a scene together unless they're in a pod living together.

So you will see in our production there are two scenes in the present stave that we just couldn't figure out how to do without enlisting pods. One is the Cratchit scene. So we've got a little pod of Taavon Gamble and his partner Adam, and their niece Evelyn who's playing Tiny Tim.

And then Rodney Witherspoon, Jessica Smith, and Christopher Lindsay who are playing nephew Fred, Lucy, and Topher, as he's called in my version. They are all MFA students who are roommates. The limitations imposed upon us by COVID were much more difficult than adapting



because we had to figure out how to make this event happen even if people can't be in a scene together.

**ND:** You called this an interactive event — so it's not a play, it's not a movie, it's somewhere in between? Could you try to define that a little bit more?

**CC:** Yeah, it's a little hard to define. We're going to invite you to dance at a particular point. We're going to put together a scavenger list and a punch recipe. We're going to make it something that you can gather your family around - so it's interactive in that way. We're going to ask you to be a present tense audience member. We're going to turn some of the images from the Past scene into coloring pages that you can download and use at home. It's things like that. It's inviting people to participate.

**ND:** What excites you most about directing this year's production of *A Christmas Carol*?

**CC:** It's exciting to do it with such a small cast. We've done this really cool thing with the Ghost of Christmas Past where she is a librarian who reaches into the screen and pulls out a little paper Scrooge. She places him in a children's book and they travel together into his past. I've always loved the notion of drawings coming to life. And it's exciting to be able to do fun things that we wouldn't be able to do on stage.

**ND:** Any new characters?

**CC:** It's not a new character, it's re-envisioned. We've often had a Reader character who is like a narrator that will talk directly to the audience and sometimes it's a group of people. This year we have Danny Duque-Estrada as the Spirit of Christmas. He's going to be talking directly to the audience. So, it's not a new character, but it's new in this environment because I don't think a lot of these new media productions use narrators.

**ND:** You are notorious for being one of the directors who didn't use snow in *A Christmas Carol*. Will there be snow this year?

**CC:** My youthful arrogance and not knowing as much about *A Christmas Carol*, and I didn't use snow my first year. People love their snow. It will depend upon the weather because we won't manufacture it during our outside shots, but I can promise everyone that when we're in the theater there will be snow.

**ND:** What do you hope audiences take away from this production?

**CC:** I hope that people feel less lonely. I think a lot of us are struggling with loneliness. I hope that people will feel that being alive and celebrating the things that make us alive is a really good thing to do when so much seems so wrong right now. And I hope they'll find hope, because I think that's what we all need right now. Just a little bit of hope. ■

Above: Richard Kneeland as Ebenezer Scrooge in Trinity Rep's first production of *A Christmas Carol* in 1977



# 43 Years of Holly & Ivy, Spirits & Smiles at Trinity Rep

Just as Charles Dickens had no idea that his little book would sell 6,000 copies on its first day of publication, Trinity Rep's founding artistic director Adrian Hall and composer Richard Cumming had no idea that tickets for their premiere stage adaptation of Dickens' classic would nearly sell out before it was even written. Over four decades later, *A Christmas Carol* is Trinity Rep's favorite holiday tradition.

In 1977, Hall and Cumming wrote an adaptation with music of the Dickens novel for the stage. It was such a great success that audience demand warranted another production the following year. This challenged the company of directors, designers, and actors to re-invent the story of *A Christmas Carol* each season. It remains the most anticipated and highly attended production in Trinity Rep's season, a family tradition for 43 years... and counting!

In 2020, when faced with unprecedented circumstances, Trinity Rep felt it was more urgent than ever to bring *A Christmas Carol* to families and schools across New England in a virtual format. Our creative team asked ourselves, how does this play change throughout the years? How do we create a production that meets the current needs of our audiences?

To answer these questions, we needed to embrace the fact that elements can change to meet the moment. In our case, we decided to throw out the need to be faithful to the Dickens' text in order to and center our community.

Representation matters and we believe that it art-making and

story-telling are better when they reflect the fullness of humanity. Trinity Rep acknowledges our complicit and too-often active involvement in upholding and benefiting from structures of racism and oppression, including the ways in which we tell stories and whose voices and experiences are at the center of those stories. We are committed to going further and taking steps toward healing in our community.

While we remain true to the spirit and message of Dickens' story, we deliberately departed from his original text in a few ways. In London in 1843, it was rare that a black man would be a successful businessman due to racist laws and enslavement. This year, resident acting company member, artist, and activist, Joe Wilson, Jr. portrays Scrooge as a Black man. Another departure is that Bob Cratchit does not have a wife but rather a husband, Sam. In Dickensian times, gay couples would have lived as "roommates," as same-sex marriage was not legalized in England until 2014. The character known as Mr. Fezziwig in the story is Mrs. Fezziwig in our production, even though a woman would not have legally been allowed to own property nor run her own business unless she was a widow. We chose to portray an empowered, independent, successful woman in business.

As we rebuild our organization and industry back from the destructive effects of the pandemic, we celebrate all people and all forms of love, in an effort to model and enact a more equitable world. We are steadfast in our work to be as inclusive and representative of our community as possible. ■

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MAGGIE MASON & BRIAN McELENNEY,  
*A CHRISTMAS CAROL*, 2016  
PHOTO BY MARKTUREK

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# Christmas Across Cultures

Christmas, as we know it to be, is a Victorian invention stemming from the 1860s. It is seemingly the most celebrated holiday in the world, combining culture, religion, and secular activities over hundreds of years to create what we know as the modern Christmas that exists now. But where do some of these traditions come from and how did they start?

## ENGLAND – “Happy Christmas!”

In the 1830s, John Calcott Horsley popularized sending Christmas greeting cards by producing small cards with holiday scenes and prewritten messages within. Mistletoe was considered to have magical powers by Celtic and Teutonic people, and was hung in homes for good luck. During the Victorian era, it was hung in homes for similar reasons, but if someone was found standing alone under the mistletoe, they would have to be kissed by another person in the room (which was not typical behavior in Victorian society). Caroling began in England as well. Choirs would travel on foot to larger homes or castles and sing, hoping to be treated to a meal or compensated for their performance.

## THE UNITED STATES – “Merry Christmas!”

Children hang stockings by their bed or fireplace, hoping for them to be filled with treats or small gifts while they sleep. According to reports from Captain John Smith, eggnog was first made and consumed in Jamestown, Virginia in 1607.

## GERMANY – “Froehliche Weihnachten!”

The German winter solstice always included decorating evergreen trees. The first labeled “Christmas Tree” specifically for the holiday appeared in the late 17th century, and spread after Wolfgang von Goethe included them in his novel *The Suffering of Young Werther*. The first German immigrant decorated trees in Pennsylvania in the 1820's, and Prince Albert introduced Queen Victoria and England to Christmas Trees upon marrying her and bringing his culture's tradition.

## MEXICO – “Feliz Navidad!”

A red and green plant brought to America from Mexico in 1828 by an American minister named Joel R. Poinsett. Thought to be in line with the growing holiday, the plant was named “poinsettia” and was seen in greenhouses around Christmas. They became a symbol of the holiday by 1900. Piñatas are filled with snacks, candies, and coins and hung from



the ceiling. Children hit the piñata until it breaks and they can gather what's inside.

**GREECE –** “Kala Christouyenna!” During the 12 days of Christmas, many people believe kallikantzeri, or goblins, cause mischief and chaos.

**NORWAY –** “Gledelig Jul!” The Yule log comes from the ancient Norse, who would use it to celebrate the return of the sun with their winter solstice. This is part of the reason why gathering around the fire, typically family fireplaces, are central imagery to Christmas. The Yule log's form has changed in recent Christmases, with the shape being represented in the form of cheese, cakes, and desserts!

**FINLAND –** “Hyvää Joulua!” Families listen to the popular broadcast radio event “Peace of Christmas.” Another custom is to visit the grave sites of family members, friends, and loved ones.

**SWEDEN –** “God Jul!” Many people in Scandinavian countries celebrate St. Lucia Day on December 13th, which is seen as the start of their holiday season. Light is the main theme of the holiday, and though it has changed over the years, many families still choose to operate by candlelight on St. Lucia Day. Community celebrations often include a large bonfire as the night falls.

**UKRAINE –** “Srozhdestvom Kristovym!” A traditional twelve-course meal is prepared on Christmas day. The youngest child in the family watches at the window for the first star in the sky to appear, at which point, the family begins their feast.

**CENTRAL AMERICA –** St. Francis of Assisi created the first manger scene in 1224 in order to explain the birth of Jesus to others. A manger scene is a primary decoration for the holidays in Central American cultures, and spread to South American and European nations.

**AUSTRALIA –** As Christmas is a part of Australia's summer season, many Christmases are spent at the beach or outdoors barbecuing together, often with family and friends.

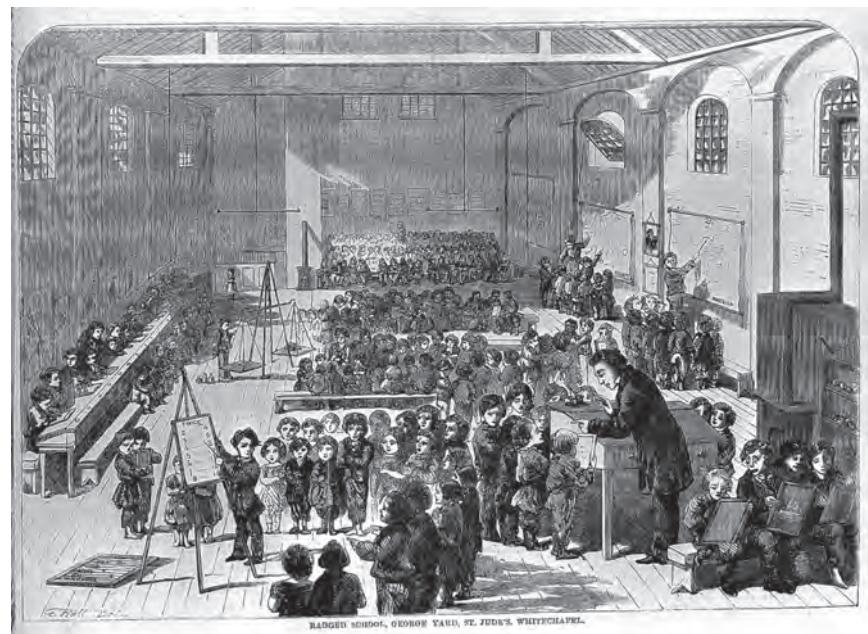
# Writing for Change

## Dickens' Inspiration for *A Christmas Carol*

Notes from Goodman Theatre's 1997 Playbill for *A Christmas Carol*

When he sat down to write *A Christmas Carol* in 1843, Dickens was already one of the foremost literary figures and social crusaders of his time, but little did he imagine that his ghostly Christmas tale would assure his future financial security, restore the then dying tradition of celebrating Christmas, and give life to characters that have endured over 150 years. After visiting several of London's charity "Ragged Schools" for poor children, Dickens decided to write an article condemning the treatment of the poor and their lack of access to education. The working poor who crowded the factories and mines were often forced to choose between work in abysmal conditions for very little money or begging on street corners. Victorian society looked on this without concern, content to think that these conditions were a necessary evil for the advancement of the state.

Fortunately for us, Dickens never finished the article. Instead, he wrote an uplifting tale of holiday cheer and an old miser's redemption. *A Christmas Carol* was written in a feverish six weeks. Dickens was so sure of the story's potential for success that he paid all publication costs himself, insisting on an elaborate format with gilt edges, colored end papers, and four hand-colored plates by *Punch*\* artist John Leech. He priced the manuscript at a modest five shillings to make it accessible to a wider audience. Dickens' faith in his story was not misplaced. Six thousand copies of the first edition were sold on the day of publication. ■



### What's a Ragged School?

In Victorian London, "Ragged Schools" were educational facilities set up by charities (often religiously affiliated) to provide education, food, clothing, and lodging for poor children. The schools received no government support, however, and therefore were in poor condition. Additionally, only one out of every three children attended school during Dickens' life—an estimated 100,000 poor children in Victorian London never even attended a Ragged School.

Above: Child welfare: Ragged School, Whitechapel, 19th Century. Courtesy Wellcome Collection, London.

These articles were originally published in Goodman Theatre Education & Engagement's Study Guide for *A Christmas Carol*. It is reprinted here with permission.

*"On Thursday night, I went to the Ragged School; and an awful sight it is... I have very seldom seen, in all the strange and dreadful things I have seen in London and elsewhere, anything so shocking as the dire neglect of soul and body exhibited in these children. [...] in the prodigious misery and ignorance of the swarming masses of mankind in England, the seeds of its certain ruin are sown. I never saw that Truth so staring out in hopeless characters as it does from the walls of this place."*

—CHARLES DICKENS, FROM A LETTER TO MISS BURDETT COUTTS, SEPT. 16, 1843

\*Punch was a British weekly magazine of humor and satire published from 1841 to 1992 and 1996 to 2002.

# Workhouses, Prisons, and The Surplus Population

These are three concepts that may seem foreign to modern audiences. During the time of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, England was in the middle of one of the largest population increases that history had ever seen. During the 19th century, London became the world's most populous city. London's population grew from 1 million in 1800 to over 2 million by the time *A Christmas Carol* was published, and to 6.5 million by the end of the 19th century. London's population grew partly due to urbanization, as people fled the countryside to work in factories. While the factory conditions were often harsh, millions of Britons found them preferable to the backbreaking agricultural labor and monotony of rural life.

The idea of a "surplus population" predates Dickens' novel, harking back to antiquity and, in its

by the end of the 19th century. London's population grew partly due to urbanization, as people fled the countryside to work in factories. While the factory conditions were often harsh, millions of Britons found them preferable to the backbreaking agricultural labor and monotony of rural life.

The idea of a "surplus population" predates Dickens' novel, harking back to antiquity and, in its

The debate over "overpopulation," has continued to rage on, more recently between neo-Malthusians like the Stanford University biologist Paul Ehrlich and rational optimists like the late University of Maryland economist Julian Simon. The latter's insight was that human beings themselves are the "ultimate resource" making all other resources more plentiful. (Recent research lends support to Simon's ideas).

During Dickens' time, the idea of humans being the "ultimate resource" was used to a fault in workhouses, which often operated closer to prisons. The history of workhouses traces back to the Poor Law Act of 1388. By 1576 the law stipulated in the Poor Relief Act that if a person was able and willing, they needed to work in order to receive support. People who were able to work were thus given the offer of employment in a house of correction, essentially to serve as a punishment for people who were capable of working but were unwilling. This was a system designed to deal with the "persistent idlers."

When enacting the Poor Laws in some cases, some parishes forced horrendous family situations, for example whereby a husband would sell his wife in order to avoid them becoming a burden which would prove costly to the local authorities. The laws brought in throughout the century would only help to entrench the system of the workhouse further into society. By the 1830s the majority of parishes had at least one workhouse which would operate with prison-like conditions. Surviving in such places proved perilous, as mortality rates were high especially with diseases such as smallpox and measles spreading like wildfire. Conditions were cramped with beds squashed together, hardly any room to move and with little light. When they were not in their sleeping corners, the inmates were expected to work. A factory-style production line which used children was both unsafe and in the age of industrialization focused on profit rather than solving issues of pauperism. This system contributed to the splitting up of families, with people forced to sell what little belongings they had and hoping they could see themselves through this rigorous system. The conditions were harsh and treatment was cruel with families divided, forcing children to be separated from their parents. Once an individual had entered the workhouse they would be given a uniform to be worn for the entirety of their stay. The inmates were prohibited from talking to one another and were expected to work long hours doing manual labour such as cleaning, cooking, and using machinery. ■



Excerpts taken from "A Christmas Carol and the Politics of 'Overpopulation'" by Chelsea Follett and "The Victorian Workhouse" by Jessica Brain

Above: John Leech cartoon from Punch, 1852, courtesy of the Wellcome Library, London

early modern iteration, Thomas Malthus' 1798 work *An Essay on the Principle of Population*. Malthus' idea—that too many people would deplete resources and lead to scarcity—was popular among British intellectuals when Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol*. Indeed, in 1840s England, the concept of overpopulation seemed more relevant than ever as the population of London swelled.

Writer and economist Jerry Bowyer has argued in *Forbes* that with *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens was weighing in on a central economic debate of his time. That is, the debate between Malthusians and the disciples of the Scottish economist Adam Smith, like the French economist Jean Baptiste Say, who argued that peaceful market exchange could create prosperity and meet the needs of a growing populace. Say was right. British population growth coincided with massive enrichment.

**Y**ou might be surprised how much of an impact the donors to Trinity Rep's Annual Fund have. Numbering nearly 3,000 households, individual donors contribute more than any other group of supporters — exceeding business, foundation, and government support. The generous support of these donors has built a strong foundation that is helping Trinity Rep weather these challenging times. With them, you can help ensure that the organization re-emerges from this temporary pause of in-person activities as a stronger, more equitable, and more vibrant resource for our community.

Thanks to the generosity and vision of our partners at the Rhode Island Foundation and Ocean State Job Lot, this holiday season, donors who contribute to Trinity Rep can have an even more significant impact on our community. The Rhode Island Foundation will be matching dollar-for-dollar the first \$60,000 donated to Trinity Rep between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve with a grant to the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. Then, Ocean State Job Lot will match the second \$60,000 donated in that time frame with an equally-valued donation of food. Donors to Trinity Rep have the opportunity to unlock up to \$120,000 in support for the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. We are excited to have this philanthropic partnership and hope that you will participate. More information is available at [www.trinityrep.com/match](http://www.trinityrep.com/match).

Your contribution to Trinity Rep has a direct impact on our ability to:

### **Offer Free Programs for Our Community**

Individual donors have played a critical role in our ability to make *A Christmas Carol Online* free for everyone this year by helping to underwrite the costs associated with producing and distributing the video. This holiday offering, however, is just one of the many free events and programs offered to the public. Over the past several years, Trinity Rep has expanded our slate of free programs like America Too, which puts the voices of our community on the stage, and Teatro en El Verano, which

# **What Your Donation Supports**

tours bilingual Shakespeare productions throughout Rhode Island. In addition to offering these specific programs and many others, Trinity Rep is proud to catalyze civic and community dialogue, creating a welcoming space for conversations and action. All of that is made possible with the support of our donors.

### **Produce Live Theater**

Because Trinity Rep is committed to affordability and excellence, ticket sales cover only about half the cost of producing the innovative and captivating shows that appear on our stages. The balance is underwritten by donors. Shows that had audiences buzzing - like *The Prince of Providence*, *Ragtime*, *black odyssey*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *A Christmas Carol*, which builds on more than four decades of creating family holiday memories and traditions - would not be possible without the charitable support of people like you.

### **Create Educational Opportunities**

Trinity Rep's education programs and the students they serve are a significant beneficiary of the generosity of Annual Fund donors. Student tickets for Project Discovery student matinees are significantly discounted or free of charge and provide opportunities for over 15,000 students each year to see professional theater that is integrated with their curriculum through in-class workshops and study guides. Our supporters also make it possible for students of all ages and backgrounds to access arts education, workforce training, and after-school or summer learning programs that have become national models with accessible pricing and scholarships. We are also leading the nation in combining the arts

with healthcare initiatives, especially for children and adults on the autism spectrum.

### **Train the Next Generation**

Brown University and Trinity Rep are ranked in the top 5 in the world for our joint MFA programs in acting and directing. Graduates of these programs can be seen on television, film, and stages around the country, and at the helm of some of the country's leading theater companies. Our training of the next generation of theater leaders and artists doesn't stop there, however. We invest in comprehensive internships that give college graduates hands-on training in administrative, artistic, and production fields that position them for the next phase of their career. Our Teen Ambassador program gives current high school students opportunities to develop leadership and analytic skills throughout their year-long program.

### **Support Our Region**

Trinity Rep is a linchpin of Providence's arts and entertainment district, providing nearly \$21 million in direct and indirect economic benefit annually in the surrounding community in a typical year. When fully-producing, we employ over 300 artists, educators, and administrators, making us one of the largest employers of artists in the region. In addition, Trinity Rep provides our region's residents and visitors with opportunities to experience and participate in creative expression, building 21st century skills in empathy, self-esteem, teamwork, conflict resolutions, and critical thinking.

Without the philanthropic support of people like you, none of this is possible. We are grateful for the support of our donors and invite you to learn more at [trinityrep.com/support](http://trinityrep.com/support) or call (401) 453-9235 for more information.

**Visit [www.trinityrep.com/give](http://www.trinityrep.com/give) or text "SCROOGE" to 44-321 to make a gift today!**

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# Trinity Rep and Food Bank Partnership Gets A Boost from Rhode Island Foundation & Ocean State Job Lot

Since 2006, at the end of every performance of *A Christmas Carol*, the actor playing Ebenezer Scrooge steps forward and asks the audience to help support the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. As they exit the theater, audience members have looked into their hearts and pockets and dropped coins, bills, and checks into the collection coffers. Last year, their donations totaled over \$60,000 and in total, audiences have contributed over \$665,000 since the tradition began.

Our partnership looks a little different this year. With the shift to producing the show online, we didn't want to lose the opportunity to raise funds and awareness for this extraordinary organization that provides such critical support for our community. Thanks to two local organizations, we have a new way forward. The Rhode Island Foundation has matched every gift made to Trinity Rep between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve with a grant to the Rhode Island Community Food Bank of \$60,000. Ocean State Job Lot is doing a second match of \$60,000 in food. For more information, visit [trinityrep.com/match](http://trinityrep.com/match).

Thanks to the generosity and leadership of these organizations, Trinity Rep patrons can support two non-profits at the same time! While contributions to Trinity Rep are always important, they are even more critical at this time when there is no ticket revenue. Likewise, demand for the Food Bank's services is hitting unprecedented levels and their need is stronger than ever.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, the Food Bank has been distributing food to 68,000 Rhode Islanders each month through a network of 159 member agencies including pantries, meal sites, shelters, emergency distribution programs, and senior centers. This year, the Food Bank distributed 13.8 million pounds of food. For more info, visit [www.rifoodbank.org](http://www.rifoodbank.org). ■

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Stephen Berenson, Angela Brazil, Timothy Crowe, Janice Duclos, Daniel Duque-Estrada, Mia Ellis, Rebecca Gibel, Mauro Hantman, Phyllis Kay, Brian McEleney, Jude Sandy, Anne Scurria, Stephen Thorne, Charlie Thurston, Rachael Warren, Joe Wilson, Jr.

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# Community Sing!

Sing along with us! Members of our community have helped us create a Community Sing that you can enjoy and sing along with. Visit [www.TrinityRep.com/sing](http://www.TrinityRep.com/sing) to watch or join us for this virtual singalong.

## We Wish You a Merry Christmas

We wish you a merry Christmas  
We wish you a merry Christmas  
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year  
Good tidings we bring to you and your kin  
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year

Oh, bring us some figgy pudding  
Oh, bring us some figgy pudding  
Oh, bring us some figgy pudding  
And bring it right here

Good tidings we bring to you and your kin  
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year

We won't go until we get some  
We won't go until we get some  
We won't go until we get some  
So bring it right here

Good tidings we bring to you and your kin  
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year

We wish you a merry Christmas  
We wish you a merry Christmas  
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year  
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year

## Go Tell It on the Mountain

Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere.  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching  
over silent flocks by night,  
behold throughout the heavens,  
there shone a holy light.

Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere.  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born.

Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere.  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born (*3 times*)

## Deck the Halls

Deck the halls with boughs of holly  
Fa la la la la, la la la la (fa la la la la, la la la la)  
'Tis the season to be jolly  
Fa la la la la, la la la la (fa la la la la, la la la la)  
Don we now our gay apparel  
Fa la la la la, la la la la (fa la la la la, la la la la)  
Troll the ancient Yuletide carol  
Fa la la la la, la la la la

See the blazing yule before us  
Fa la la la la, la la la la (fa la la la la, la la la la)  
Strike the harp and join the chorus  
(Fa la la la la, la la la, fa la la la la, la la la la)  
Follow me in merry measure  
Fa la la la la, la la la la, fa la la la la, la la la la  
While I tell of Yuletide treasure  
(Fa la la la la, la la la la)

# Fun for Everyone in Your Family!

Perhaps you are waiting for *A Christmas Carol Online* to start, making a whole day or evening of watching the show, or just have a bit of time in your busy holiday schedule. We have put together projects, puzzles, coloring pages, and favorite sweet and savory recipes from Trinity Rep folk that would put a smile on the lips of even the most "clutching, grasping, pinching, scraping, squeezing, wrenching, covetous, and mean old man."

**Enjoy!**

## Salt Dough Ornaments

This activity is a great way to make lasting memories — create your own shapes or prints!

### GATHER THE FOLLOWING INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup table salt
- 4 cups flour
- 1.5 cups water  
(warm water is probably easier)



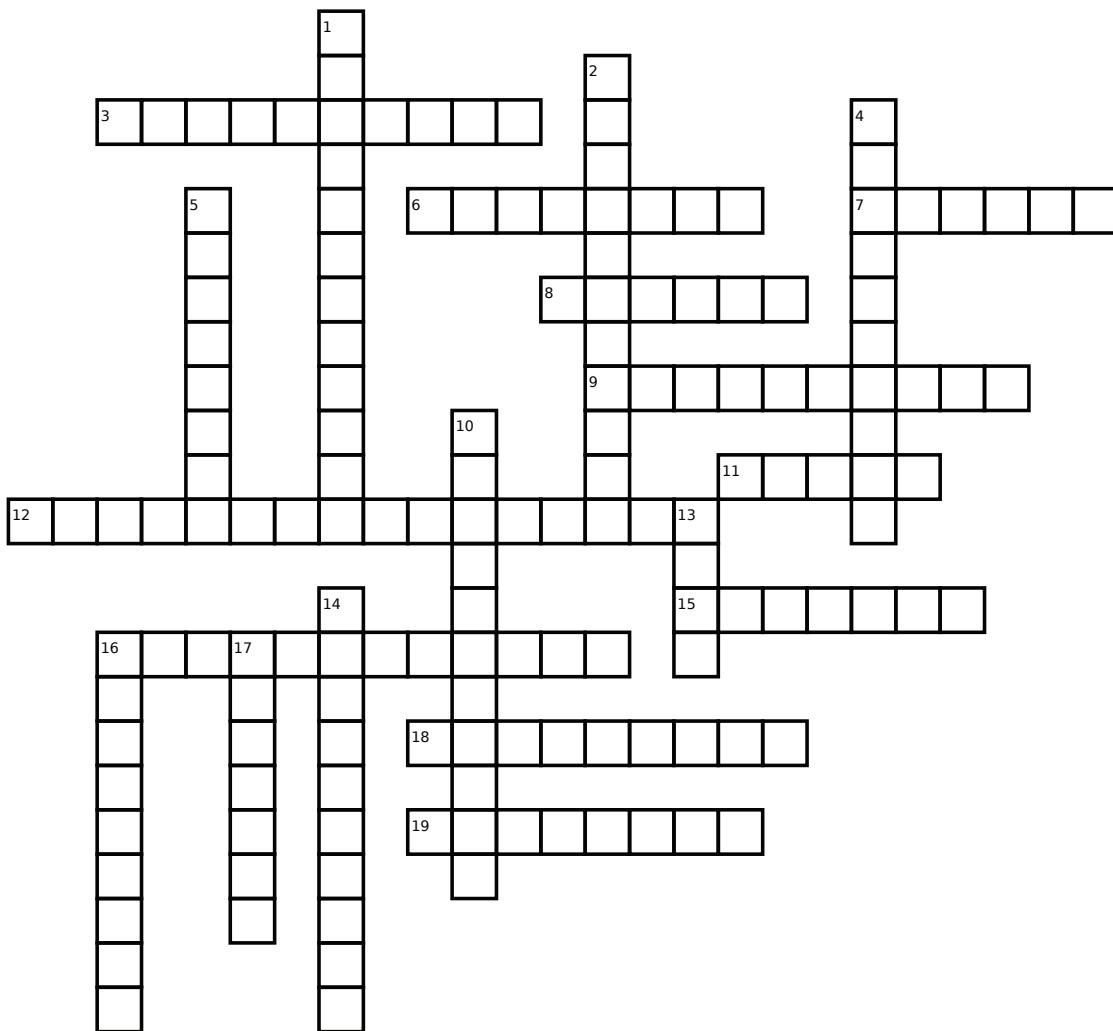
### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.
- Mix the ingredients together in a large bowl using a spoon. Slowly add water (you may not need the whole amount). When it becomes too hard to stir, begin to knead with your hands.
  - Knead until the dough is uniform and soft.
  - Divide dough into smaller sections. Take each section and roll out between parchment paper until dough is about  $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick. You can also add a little bit of flour so the roller doesn't stick.
  - Cut out shapes using cookie cutters or a cup to make circles.
  - If you want to press in different shapes (handprints, thumb prints, etc) now is the time.
- Use a pencil or straw to create a small hole at the top of the shape.
- Bake for 2-3 hours or until firm to the touch. Check at 2 hours and then every 20 minutes after as baking time will vary if the thickness varies at all (which is likely if doing these with kids!).
- Remove from oven, let cool, and paint if desired with acrylic or washable tempera paint.
- Once paint is completely dry, seal with Mod Podge if desired.

*Images from eatwheat.org & thebestideasforkids.com*



# Test Your *Trinity Rep* Knowledge



## DOWN

- 1 How to wish a Merry Christmas in Spanish
- 2 "Mankind was my business! Charity, Mercy, \_\_\_\_\_ and Benevolence were all my business!"
- 4 The number of years Trinity Rep has produced *A Christmas Carol*
- 5 The actor who has played Scrooge the most
- 10 Scrooge's business partner
- 13 The type of log burned during a traditional English Christmas celebration
- 14 "Are there no prisons? Are there no \_\_\_\_\_?"
- 16 Three core values of Trinity Rep: Company, \_\_\_\_\_, and Education
- 17 The youngest child in the Cratchit family

## ACROSS

- 3 The light that never goes off in the theater
- 6 We have a matching donation campaign to benefit which Rhode Island organization?
- 7 The type of school that inspired Dickens to write *A Christmas Carol*?
- 8 *A Christmas Carol*'s presenting sponsor
- 9 Who adapted the first version of *A Christmas Carol* for Trinity Rep?
- 11 Scrooge's typical dinner
- 12 Trinity Rep's landmark student matinee series
- 15 The name of the main theater building
- 16 Director of this year's production
- 18 Where actors get ready to go onstage
- 19 "The finest employer in all of London! In all of England! In all the world!"

# *Charles Dickens' Own Words Search*

H J O Y N B D Y O D Z I C E S W B W I N  
O K U S H E N Y Y Z T A H F S B Q V V W  
L Z N N X U T U Z K C E A G W Y S L K E  
L F I H C L C Y P S L N R Z E C Z Z L A  
Y Q Z G C R I R P G P H W I I V Y L V O  
O O U U N H T U A T D M O H W P Z Y A Q  
I D G Z N O G Z J T Q B M F Q F U W O D  
V P L X E D R Z G O C Y A X L R E U A M  
B L R C S A E A S E I H N I M L E F T W  
C E R E H S H R N O A H I X H S B E U P  
U L N N S R R L D C P O M T U O E Z R E  
A G Z E Z E I U S O E B F E M O N Z K C  
P C I T V L N S I M N T N L B Q E I E T  
E H J C C O O T T I V E W R U Q Z W Y R  
D E D S M R L V W M A E P K G N E I L E  
X E M L Q Q W E A D A C C O J P R G X C  
Y R E H A P P I N E S S J W T Q Q H A L  
Y R R E G K C V T C Z I Q N L A J M Y G  
B H R X W T N F A Y E H T O W Q T W F T  
A J Y I V K Z I X F X T O M B S T O N E

Humbug  
Joy  
Christmas  
Spectre  
Present  
Charwoman  
Tombstone

Ignorance  
Want  
Ebenezer  
Benevolence  
Holly  
Ivy

Underdone Potato  
Fezziwig  
Merry  
Cheer  
Happiness  
Cratchit  
Turkey

*Solution on page 12*



## Free Paint Party with Mermaid Masterpieces

Join **Becky** from **Mermaid Masterpieces** online as she virtually guides you in painting Scrooge gleefully tipping his hat.

### SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Paint: black, white, yellow, red, and blue
- Brushes: preferably one small and one slightly larger
- Cup of water for rinsing brushes
- Black sharpie
- Canvas or paper (roughly 8x10 inches)

**TIME** from blank canvas or paper to masterpiece: 50 minutes

**VIDEO LINK** [www.TrinityRep.com/paint](http://www.TrinityRep.com/paint)

# Chocolate Sugar Cookies

Courtesy of [sweetopia.net](http://sweetopia.net)

A flavorful twist on the classic, that are great decorated with royal icing, frosting, sprinkles, or just plain. Yields approximately 35 medium-sized cookies

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups (4 sticks) unsalted butter (room temperature)
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 3 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

### INSTRUCTIONS

Cream the butter and sugar together in the bowl of an electric mixer on low to medium speed (use a paddle attachment). Mix for about one minute until thoroughly incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and mix for a few seconds more. Over-mixing the butter and sugar will cause too much air to be incorporated into the dough. If you'd like a light and fluffy cookie, that's ideal, however the dough will spread more during baking — not great if you'd like the cookie to hold its shape.

Add eggs slowly and mix. Scrape down the bowl and mix again.

Add vanilla extract. Stir briefly.

Sift your dry ingredients together. Add all of the flour mixture to the bowl. Mix on low speed for 30 seconds. When the dough clumps around the paddle attachment it's ready. It's also important at this stage not to over mix the dough.

Roll the dough out between 2 large pieces of parchment paper. Place on a baking sheet and into the fridge for at least 1 hour.

Roll out the dough further if you need to, and cut out cookie shapes. Place on a cookie sheet (parchment-lined, non-stick, or sprayed with non-stick baking spray works best). Re-roll scraps and repeat. Put cookie dough shapes back into the fridge for 10–60 minutes to chill again. They will hold their shape better when baked.

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees F. or 176 degrees C. Bake for 8-12 minutes or until the center of the cookie no longer looks wet. The baking time will depend on the size of your cookie.

Let cookies cool to room temperature and decorate!

# Peanut Butter Kiss Cookies

Courtesy of Paula Butterfield

An easy and foolproof recipe for the classic Christmas treat. This will yield approximately 18 cookies. If you love peanut butter, you're going to want to double it.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 3/4 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 tablespoon milk
- 1 bag Hershey's Kisses (Unwrap the number of cookies you have rolled)

## INSTRUCTIONS

Mix together all ingredients except Kisses. Refrigerate dough for at least 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.

Form into balls by rolling between your palms. Put some granulated sugar in a bowl. Roll the balls in sugar. Place 9 balls, spaced out on a cookie sheet (parchment-lined, non-stick, or sprayed with non-stick baking spray works best) and bake for 10 minutes. Repeat for second batch.

Top with Kisses while still hot.

# Streusel-Top Traditional Mincemeat Pie

A traditional English dessert, with an easy shortcut.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1 (27 oz.) jar Ready-to-Use Classic Original Mincemeat
- 1 (9-inch) unbaked pastry pie crust
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans or walnuts (optional)

## INSTRUCTIONS

Move oven rack to lowest position in bottom of oven. Heat oven to 375 degrees F.

Create streusel mixture by beating butter, brown sugar, and salt in medium bowl with mixer on high speed until light and fluffy. Blend in flour and oats just until crumbly.

Spoon mincemeat into unbaked pie crust, spreading evenly. Sprinkle evenly with nuts, if desired. Finely crumble streusel mixture over filling.

Bake on bottom rack for 50 minutes or until crust is golden brown and filling begins to bubble. Cover with foil during last 20 minutes to avoid over-browning. Cool completely on wire rack.

# Granny's Kitchen Pie Crust

Courtesy of Amanda Downing Carney

## INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups of flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 3/4 cups of Crisco shortening
- 1/2 cup cold water
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 1 egg

## INSTRUCTIONS

Mix first three ingredients in a large mixing bowl, then cut in shortening. Whisk together last three ingredients in a small bowl. Add small bowl of wet ingredients to large bowl of dry ingredients, being careful to not over-work or over-mix. Divide into four balls and refrigerate until ready to roll out

# Mom's Scottish Shortbread

Courtesy Jennifer Canole

My mom makes shortbread cookies every year at Christmas (her grandfather was Scottish). They're delightful with a cup of hot tea on a winter day.

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 sticks unsalted butter or margarine (room temperature)
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 cups flour

## INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.

Beat butter and sugar until fluffy. Mix flour in gradually until well mixed. Spread into an ungreased 13"x9" cake pan using your hands.

Bake 35-40 minutes until lightly browned.

Remove from oven, pierce all over with a fork, and cut into squares. Cool in pan.

# Joe's Prosciutto-Wrapped, Stuffed Dates Appetizer

Courtesy of Amanda Downing Carney

## INGREDIENTS

- One dozen whole Mahjool dates
- Garlic and herb Boursin cheese
- Thinly sliced prosciutto

## INSTRUCTIONS

Remove pits in dates by slicing only half-way through on one-side so it opens like a book. Fill the cavity with cheese and wrap prosciutto around date to completely encase it.

On medium heat, sear in a dry pan turning every 2 minutes until prosciutto is crispy all the way around.

# Loli's Seafood Paella

Courtesy of Rebecca Gibel

One of my all-time favorites, not only because it's DELICIOUS, but because of its origins. I spent a time in Valencia, Spain after graduation because my then-boyfriend invited me to stay with his surrogate mom there. I spent much of my time shadowing Maria Dolores (nicknamed Loli) in the kitchen, practicing my Spanish, and writing down everything she made. Her paella was out of this world. Cooking time is about an hour and a half.

## INGREDIENTS

- Chorizo
- Shrimp
- Mussels, clams and scallops
- Chicken legs and thighs
- Olive oil
- Saffron (don't skimp, 1-2 tablespoons)
- Chicken broth (about 5 cups)
- 2-3 cups Arborio rice
- 3 tomatoes, de-seeded, peeled and sliced
- Parsley
- Almonds (raw)
- Garlic
- Leeks
- Red, green and yellow bell peppers, sliced
- 2 medium onions, diced
- Red wine (about 1 cup)
- Green beans (fresh and raw).
- Sliced green olives with pimento (1 medium jar)

## INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.

In paella pan on the stove top, sauté chorizo, and then chicken in some olive oil, salt, and pepper. Set aside.

In a separate pot on low, heat chicken broth and saffron together to infuse. Bring just to the boiling point.

Mash garlic, almonds and parsley into a paste. Set aside.

In paella pan with leftover oil, sauté peppers, then add onion and leek. Once onions are translucent, add tomatoes and red wine. Mixture should be simmering. Add rice, and stir until coated and rice is slightly browned. Add broth, and stir in parsley paste mixture.

Arrange chicken, chorizo, seafood, and green beans. Add rice mix. Bake uncovered until broth is absorbed and rice is tender.

Remove from oven, arrange sliced green olives, and serve!

# Sambal Sweet Potato Puree

Courtesy of Curt Columbus

For those that want the simple, creamy sweetness of the sweet potato with a little fiery kick from sambal, the Vietnamese chili garlic sauce....

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 sweet potatoes, scrubbed clean
- 4 cloves of garlic, peeled
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 cup half and half
- 1 teaspoon sambal
- 4 oz. butter
- salt and pepper to taste

## INSTRUCTIONS

Bake the sweet potatoes on a cookie sheet (parchment-lined, non-stick, or sprayed with non-stick baking spray works best) at 425 degrees F. for 45-50 minutes. (Don't forget to prick them all over with a fork before you bake them, or they can explode... sounds cool till you have to clean it up!)

Place the cream, half and half, and garlic in a heavy bottom saucepan and cook over low heat until the cream mixture has reduced by about a half.

Scoop out the sweet potatoes into a food processor and puree. Add the cream and the garlic, then add sambal, butter, salt, and pepper. Process to combine, till the potatoes are a fluffy puree. Check seasonings, keep warm for serving.

# Vera Berenson's Sweet Potato Casserole

Courtesy of Stephen Berenson

My mother made this holiday side dish every year. If you're the sort of family that likes gooey marshmallows with your sweet potatoes, move on. If not, here's an easy recipe. Preparation and cooking time is approximately 30 minutes — serves 8-10.

## INGREDIENTS

- 8 large sweet potatoes or yams
- 2 tablespoons butter
- Milk
- Maple syrup
- Black pepper
- Walnuts

## INSTRUCTIONS

Boil and mash the potatoes. Add the butter and a small amount of milk, just enough to start to get close to the consistency you want, from slightly thick to very smooth. Add maple syrup to bring the casserole to its final consistency. You now have a casserole of mashed overly sweet potatoes. Start adding the black pepper, a little at a time, until it begins to overpower the sweetness of the syrup. Some people like the dish highly spiced, and others prefer it a little sweeter. Cover with walnuts. (Kids love to use the walnuts to decorate the top.) This dish can be made a day or two in advance, but cover it with tin foil when you reheat it or the walnuts will burn.

# Fresh Cranberry Sauce

Courtesy of Curt Columbus

## INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup port
- 3 cups fresh cranberries picked over and rinsed, or one 12 oz., standard package
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped orange zest
- Good pinch of salt

## INSTRUCTIONS

In a large skillet, bring the port to a boil over medium high heat. Add cranberries and cook, stirring until they begin to pop, 3-5 minutes. Add the sugar, orange zest, and salt and cook, stirring, till the sugar dissolves, 3-5 minutes. Let cool before serving. You can make this a day ahead and let it sit at room temperature.

# Ultimate Challah

Courtesy of Rebecca Gibel

The recipe was supposedly passed down through generations of Jewish bakers in Łódź, Poland. I can't remember how I got the recipe, but I've loved using it for years. Makes two Challahs.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 scant tablespoon (1 package) active dry yeast
- 1 3/4 cups lukewarm water
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 5 large eggs
- 5 cups bread flour
- 3 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour, approximately
- 1 tablespoon salt
- Poppy or sesame seeds for sprinkling

## INSTRUCTIONS

In a large bowl, dissolve the yeast in the warm water. Add the sugar and the oil and mix well with a whisk or a wooden spoon.

Beat in 4 of the eggs, 1 at a time; then gradually stir in the bread flour, 2 cups of the all-purpose flour, and the salt. When you have a dough that holds together, it is ready for kneading.

To knead by hand, place the dough on a lightly floured surface. Knead well, using the heels of your hands to press the dough away and your fingers to bring it back. Continue, turning the dough, for about 10 minutes, or until the dough is smooth and elastic, adding the remaining 1 1/2 cups of all-purpose flour or as needed. To knead by machine in an electric mixer fitted with the dough hook, knead for 5 minutes on medium speed, or until smooth. You can also process half the dough at a time in a food processor fitted with the steel blade; process for about 1 minute.

After kneading, place all the dough in a large oiled bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and let it rest in a warm place for 1 hour, until almost doubled in size. You can also put the dough in an oven that has been warmed to 150 degrees for a few minutes and then turned off.

When the dough is almost doubled in size, remove it from the bowl and punch it down — the rougher you are, the more the dough likes it. Return it to the bowl, cover it again and let it rise in a warm place for 30 minutes more. Or, if you have to go out, let the dough

rise slowly in the refrigerator several hours or overnight and bring it to room temperature when ready to continue.

To make a 6-braided challah, take half the dough and form into 6 balls. Roll each ball with your hands into a strand about 14 inches long and 1 1/2 inches wide. Pinch the strands together at one end and then gently spread them into 2 groups of 3.

Next, take the outside right strand over 2 to the middle empty space. Then, take the second strand from the left to the far right. Regroup to 3 on each side. Take the outside left strand over 2 to the middle and the second strand from the right over to the far left.

Continue this method until all the strands are braided. The key is to always have 3 strands on each side so that you can keep your braid balanced. Make a second loaf the same way. Place the braided loaves in greased 10- by 4-inch loaf pans or on a greased cookie sheet with at least 2 inches in between.

To make loaves symbolizing the 12 shewbread, the consecrated loaves placed on the altar in the Temple of Jerusalem, shape one half of the dough into 12 tight balls and press them together in the bottom of a greased 10- by 4- inch loaf pan. Repeat with the second half of the dough in another pan.

Let the challah loaves rise another hour, uncovered. Fifteen minutes before putting the loaves in the oven, beat the remaining egg and brush it gently over them. Five minutes later, lightly brush them again. Then sprinkle with poppy or sesame seeds and let dry a few minutes.



Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Bake the loaves on the middle rack of the oven for 10 minutes. Then reduce the temperature to 375 (350, so no burn) degrees F. and bake for 30 minutes more. Turn off the oven and leave the loaves in 5 minutes longer to get a dark-golden crust. Remove and cool on a rack.

## VARIATION: ZINGERMAN'S BAKE HOUSE HOLIDAY TIP

Soak 3/4 cup dark raisins and 1/4 cup yellow raisins in 6 tablespoons dark rum for 1 hour or more. Add the rum-soaked raisins with any leftover rum to the dough after 5 minutes of kneading, adding a few tablespoons more flour to absorb the liquid. If you are using a mixer or food processor, work the raisins in by hand.

# Scenes from A Christmas Carol to Color



*"This is where  
I grew up!"  
said Scrooge  
to The Ghost of  
Christmas Past*



*Ebenezer Scrooge and  
The Ghost of Christmas Past  
join Mrs. Fezziwig's  
Christmas Day Party*

# The Answers

