

# A Christmas Carol

By Charles Dickens  
Adapted by David Thompson  
Directed by Michael Unger

December 4 — 24, 2011



A Christmas Carol 2010, photo by T. Charles Erickson

**McCARTER**  
THEATRE CENTER

609.258.2787 | [www.mccarter.org](http://www.mccarter.org)

91 University Place | Princeton, NJ 08540



This program is made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts and by funds from the National Endowment for the Arts.



# McCarter Theatre Center

**Emily Mann**  
*Artistic Director / Resident Playwright*

**Timothy J. Shields**  
*Managing Director*

presents

## **A Christmas Carol** **By Charles Dickens**

*adaptation by* David Thompson  
*directed by* Michael Unger  
*original music & lyrics* Michael Starobin  
*choreography* Rob Ashford  
*set design* Ming Cho Lee  
*costume design* Jess Goldstein  
*lighting design* Stephen Strawbridge  
*sound design* Brian Ronan  
*musical director* Charles Sundquist  
*choreography supervisor* Jennifer Paulson Lee  
*dialect coach* Gillian Lane-Plescia  
*casting director* Laura Stanczyk, CSA  
*supervising stage manager* Cheryl Mintz

*producing director*  
**Mara Isaacs**

*director of production*  
**David York**

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The Official Airline of McCarter Theatre Center



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*McCarter Theatre Center is a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group; the League of Resident Theatres; ArtPride New Jersey; and the New Jersey Theatre Alliance. McCarter Theatre Center operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, and United Scenic Artists.*

*Please turn off all electronic devices including beepers, cellular phones and watches for the duration of the performance. Please refrain from text messaging during the performance.*

The use of recording equipment or the taking of photographs during the performance is strictly prohibited.  
No food, drink or smoking is allowed in the theater at any time.

## December 4 – 24, 2011

### Matthews Theatre

Celebrate the season with McCarter's critically acclaimed production of Charles Dickens' classic holiday tale, ***A Christmas Carol***. Join Ebenezer Scrooge on his magical journey through Christmas past, present, and future, and experience the show that embodies the peace and goodwill of the season. Michael Unger directs McCarter's production of this cherished family tradition, with scenery by the legendary set designer Ming Cho Lee and costumes by Jess Goldstein. The perennial favorite *The New York Times* calls "A Must-See," has become a delightful holiday tradition for the whole family!

## Performance Calendar

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<b>DEC 4</b> 5:30pm	<b>DEC 5</b>	<b>DEC 6</b>	<b>DEC 7</b>	<b>DEC 8</b> FEZZIWIG PARTY 7:30pm	<b>DEC 9</b> OPENING NIGHT 7:30pm	<b>DEC 10</b> 2:00pm 7:30pm
<b>DEC 11</b> 1:00pm 5:30pm	<b>DEC 12</b>	<b>DEC 13</b>	<b>DEC 14</b> FEZZIWIG PARTY 7:30pm	<b>DEC 15</b> 7:30pm	<b>DEC 16</b> 7:30pm	<b>DEC 17</b> ASL AND AUDIO DESCRIBED 2:00pm 7:30pm
<b>DEC 18</b> OPEN CAPTIONED 1:00pm 5:30pm	<b>DEC 19</b>	<b>DEC 20</b> FESTIVAL OF TREES 7:30pm	<b>DEC 21</b> 7:30pm	<b>DEC 22</b> 7:30pm	<b>DEC 23</b> 3:00pm 7:30pm	<b>DEC 24</b> 12:00pm 4:00pm

## Holiday Entertaining at McCarter



Warm up this holiday season with our annual production of ***A Christmas Carol***. Friends, family, and co-workers are sure to enjoy this heartwarming classic, creating a lasting memory that is close to home and at a price that fits your budget.

**Groups of 6 or more receive special discounts on select performances.**

**Additional group benefits:**

Private event space for holiday party planning

All-inclusive party packages that you don't have to lift a finger to plan

Waived handling charges

Flexible payment plans

Preferred seating and upgrades

**Groups may also be eligible for:**

FREE drink coupons for everyone in your group

FREE tickets to a performance of your choice

Meet and greet opportunities with the cast!

**Don't delay—performances are filling up fast and benefits are time sensitive, so call today!**

**To check availability, discuss pricing, or investigate any of the above group benefits, please**

**Contact Megan Johnston at 609.258.6526 or [mjohnston@mccarter.org](mailto:mjohnston@mccarter.org)**

## Holiday Shopping at McCarter

### The McCarter Store



When you and your family come to McCarter Theatre to see *A Christmas Carol* this year, be sure

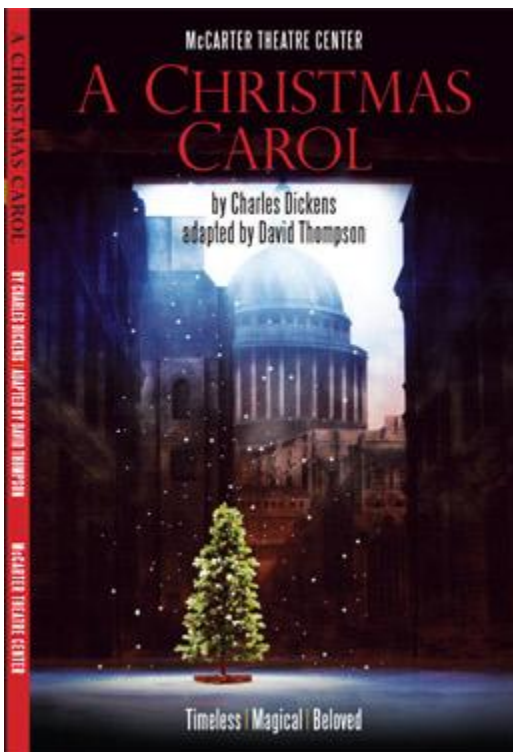


to visit The Store to get that one-of-a-kind gift you can't find anywhere else. We have a gorgeous selection of scarves, jewelry, handbags, men's cufflinks, ties, a

beautiful selection of hand crafted writing instruments, puppets and holiday décor, plus our very special *A Christmas Carol* t-shirts and our own publication of *A Christmas Carol*. Remember, every purchase at The Store supports McCarter Theatre and its programs.

The Store is open an hour prior to every show, during intermission, after the show, or by appointment. Contact Hannah Schussel at **609-258-6515** or [hschussel@mccarter.org](mailto:hschussel@mccarter.org) for more information.

### *A Christmas Carol*—The Published Script



McCarter Theatre is proud to offer the published script of David Thompson's adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*. Copies are available for sale at exclusively at The Store. The tale of the beloved holiday classic is complete with photos from the McCarter production and includes an interview with director Michael Unger. Don't miss this opportunity to take home your own piece of this treasured family tradition.

Adapted for the stage by Tony-nominated playwright David Thompson, *A Christmas Carol* follows the miserly Ebenezer Scrooge as he discovers the true meaning of Christmas: charity, redemption, and compassion for his fellow human beings. Praised as "intelligent" and "literate" by the press, Thompson's adaptation creates a "perfect balance of Dickensian

fidelity and modern theatricality.” *A Christmas Carol* was the first publication in McCarter’s *Production in Print* series, created in partnership with publishing company Smith and Kraus, Inc.

You can reserve a copy in advance of your visit, or order one from afar by contacting Hannah Shussel at at **609-258-6515** or [hschussel@mccarter.org](mailto:hschussel@mccarter.org)

## Community Partnerships

McCarter is pleased to highlight this season’s holiday collaborators.

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## Holiday Dinner & Theater

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The following restaurants will be participating in a special holiday promotion that entitles 2011 *A Christmas Carol* ticket holders to 15% off their restaurant check.\*

Eno Terra  
Mediterra Restaurant and Bar  
Ferry House  
Teresa Caffè  
Triumph  
Winberie’s Restaurant and Bar (10% off)

\*Offer does not include alcohol. Offer expires December 31st.

For more information about the participating restaurants please visit our [Dining Guide](#).

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## Deck the Halls!

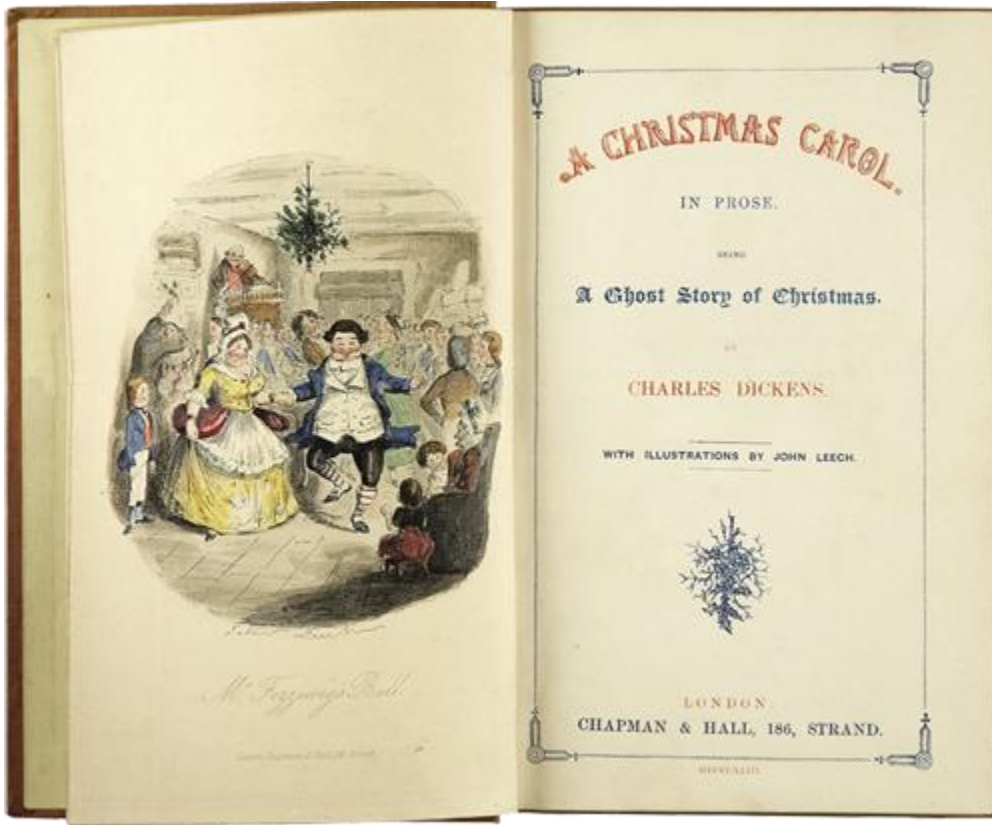
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The following retailers have generously provided the festive wreaths and décor that you see decorating our lobbies and building exterior.

Wildflowers of Princeton Junction  
Monday Morning Flower and Balloon Co.  
South Pacific Flowers  
Cottage Garden Florist  
Peterson’s Garden Center & Landscaping  
Kale’s Nursery & Landscape Service  
Ambleside Gardens & Nursery  
Yardley Flower Company  
Perna’s Flowers  
Mazur Nursery  
Willis Greenhouse

We are most thankful for the relationship and generosity of our collaborators and hope that you patronize the above establishments in support.

## The History of *A Christmas Carol*



*A Christmas Carol*  
(Charles Dickens, London: Chapman & Hall, 1843)

In February of 1843, the British Parliament released an unsettling report on the proliferation of child labor in Britain. Dickens searched for a response. He talked about writing a pamphlet “on behalf of the Poor Man’s Child” and striking a literary

“sledge-hammer” by the year’s end. In October, Dickens gave an address in Manchester to a group of working class people and was stirred by them to write a “Christmas story addressed to a similarly broad national audience.” He completed the manuscript of *A Christmas Carol* by the end of November.

By mid-December the first edition of *A Christmas Carol, In Prose, Being a Ghost Story of Christmas* was on the stands. All six thousand copies of the first printing sold out, and fifteen thousand copies were sold within a year.

Eight London theater companies had dramatic versions of the novel running by February. These extremely popular productions added songs and sometimes characters to Dickens’ text. Although Dickens had his misgivings about many of these productions, he made no attempt to shut any of them down. In fact, Dickens later did his own stage adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*, then performed it in a public reading, playing all the roles himself. He continually reworked the text, changing the performance to suit each audience.

In the 150 years since *A Christmas Carol* was published, it has been retold and adapted as a ballet, opera, musical, film, television special, puppet show, orchestral work and cartoon. Paul Davis’s book *The Life and Times of Ebenezer Scrooge* documents his research on the historical legacy of *A Christmas Carol*; in it he suggests that every age “recreates the story in response to its

own cultural needs.” For example, Davis shows that Victorian versions treated *A Christmas Carol* as a parable, a secular “retelling of the Biblical Christmas story.” In the early 1900s it became primarily a children’s story; a few decades later in the late 1920s and early 1930s, versions of *A Christmas Carol* focused on the story as a “denunciation of capitalism” and a way to escape the harsh economic reality of the Depression era. The Scrooge of the ’60s became a Freudian figure whose subconscious emerges in the form of Marley and the ghosts. More recently, Scrooge has become again “a social figure placed in the center of unsettling economic realities,” much as he was for readers in Dickens’s day.

*A Christmas Carol*’s message of generosity and social responsibility has prevailed over its long history, reminding readers and audiences of the true spirit of the holiday season. McCarter has produced *A Christmas Carol* every year since 1980, when then-artistic director Nagle Jackson brought his adaptation to the theater. The current adaptation by David Thompson was first produced at McCarter in 1991 under the direction of Scott Ellis. In 2000 Thompson revised his adaptation and a new production was created under the direction of Michael Unger. Thompson’s adaptation remains faithful to much of the language and all of the spirit of Dickens’s story, and in our production, we strive to capture both the injustice and struggles of Victorian life, and the joy and redemption of the holiday season.

## Christmas in the Age of Dickens



Christmas Tree at Windsor Castle wood engraving (J.L. Williams from *The Illustrated London News*, Christmas Supplement, 1848 Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-117376)

Did you know that Charles Dickens is often credited with contributing to the creation of Christmas holiday traditions as we know them today? In the 1840s, Dickens produced a series of extremely popular Christmas tales for the purpose of regenerating what he felt was the true spirit of Christmas. *A Christmas Carol*, the first of Dickens’ Christmas Books, is also his most beloved and widely acclaimed, cherished for its simple expression of what relations between human beings should be at Christmas time and throughout the year. In *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge’s nephew speaks these words, which sum up the Christmas spirit this enduring tale has preserved for generations past and generations to come:

***I have always thought of Christmas time...as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they were really fellow-passengers to the grave and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys.***

Partly as a result of the traditions described in *A Christmas Carol*, the English Christmas was transformed in the mid-1800s. The Victorians’ “New Christmas” stressed “the traditional values of neighborliness, charity, and good will” and emphasized the obligation of the rich to the poor. As New Christmas gradually took hold, the Victorians established many of the customs that are at the center of today’s traditional Christmas celebration. In 1840, when Prince Albert celebrated the holiday at Windsor Castle by presenting his family with the “German” Christmas tree, much of

England followed suit. Christmas trees became even more popular after an illustration of Victoria, Albert, and their children decorating a Christmas tree was published in *The Illustrated London News* in 1848 (shown above). Victorian Christmas trees were elaborately decorated with trinkets such as tin soldiers, dolls, whistles, candies, fruit, nuts, and candles. Many decorations were homemade, and children often helped make garlands and paper decorations.

The modest Christmas celebrations of the pre-Victorian era were gradually also reshaped to reflect the Victorian era's religious revival, monetary restrictions, and its growing notions of humanitarianism and festivity. The Industrial Revolution had created a new, large and visible lower class unable to celebrate Christmas with the same luxurious abandon as their wealthier neighbors. Throughout the Victorian era, Christmas celebrations began to focus predominantly on the family, particularly on children. The originally pagan ritual of caroling was revived, gift giving grew in importance, and the traditional Christmas dinner became a beloved custom to celebrate the opportunity to come together as a family.

[Click here for some recipes to try at your own holiday feast!](#)

## The Plight of Victorian England's Poor



*A workhouse, pre-1849  
(Dickens in his time, Ivor Brown)*

just too lazy to work and would take advantage of tax-funded shelter and food. To ensure that their tax money did not “go to waste,” the rich insisted that the government make the workhouses as miserable as possible. Families were separated into large groups of men, women and children. Family members could not even see each other at meals, and certainly could not sleep near each other at night. The work was mandatory and menial—a common workhouse task was to spend all day breaking larger stones into smaller pieces. The “free” food was no more than one meager portion of gruel per day.

Prison was not just a place for criminals- it was also for people who couldn't pay their bills. The wardens treated debtors like common criminals. The government designed purposefully useless

*“Are there no  
prisons? Are  
there no  
workhouses?”*

—  
Ebenezer Scrooge

A workhouse was a building where the homeless, jobless and starving could go to live, work and eat. Homelessness was a very common problem in Victorian England, and many rich people (like Scrooge) believed that the poor were

tasks for prisoners to perform so that debtors would realize the pointlessness of their crime. For example, prisoners had to walk the treadmill, a large metal cylinder with evenly spaced steps attached to it. The cylinder spun around and around while the prisoner walked for hours, struggling not to miss a step and to keep pace with the other prisoners suffering the same fate. The task was exhausting, and the government eventually banned the treadmill, but not before thousands of debtors had walked its steps.

*“We had a great deal of work to finish up from last night and clear away this morning.”*

–Martha Cratchit

Imagine spending your entire school day, plus all of your homework time, copying words from a textbook. Add a freezing room and one candle as your only source of light, and you have Bob Cratchit’s working conditions—and he had a good job by Victorian standards! Since there were no printers or copiers in the 1800s, businesses hired clerks to copy documents all day by hand. Scrooge expected Bob to do this arduous task 8 to 10 hours per day, six days a week. For this he paid Bob 15 shillings a week, just 5 shillings short of a pound, or 39 pounds a year. Experts disagree on today’s dollar equivalent of the Victorian pound, but they consistently place the value between \$20 and \$200. That means that in the best-case scenario, Bob brought home just under \$200 a week, while in the worst-case scenario, Bob earned less than \$20 a week. Rent on a decent house would have been about 9 shillings a week, leaving just 6 shillings to feed and clothe a family of six. A loaf of bread cost about a shilling.

This may have been why Martha and Peter, the two older Cratchit children, took jobs as well. Martha worked in the factory and Peter would also have had a job. Conditions for working children were brutal, and working meant that children were unable to continue their education. But with a family to feed, children of Martha and Peter’s ages would have had to help add to the family’s weekly income. In order to understand their characters better, the Young Ensemble in *A Christmas Carol* studies what working conditions were like for children their age during the 1800s—and what conditions are like for working children today.

## **Spotlight on the Set**

McCarter’s production of *A Christmas Carol* features a set by legendary scenic designer Ming Cho Lee. Lee’s set takes us to a variety of locations including Scrooge’s Childhood school, the poor but cozy Cratchit household, and the elegant home of Scrooge’s Nephew Fred. The set evokes London in 1843, then transports the audience backwards and forwards in time as the ghosts of Christmas Past and Future leads Scrooge on his journey.

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## Installing *A Christmas Carol*

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In the weeks leading up to opening night, the McCarter crew puts in a TON of man- (and woman-) hours loading in the set of *A Christmas Carol*. During the year, the set sits in four 48-foot trailers that are parked outside of McCarter's shop. Once a year, the staff loads the whole thing into the Matthews Theatre, from the show deck (the floor) to Scrooge's front

door (which flies in from above).

The biggest pieces of the set for *A Christmas Carol* are Scrooge's Bedroom and the Counting House. During much of the show, the two pieces rest far upstage (with just enough room behind them for an actor to cross from one side of the stage to the other), and are masked by other set pieces in front of them (like the London backdrop, or the front door). The counting house itself weighs 2 tons, although when it was originally built it weighed approximately 3 tons. Since that time, the crew has re-built the top half of it to make it lighter.



The various moving set pieces of the show (including Scrooge's Bedroom and the Counting House) are powered by a set of huge theatrical motors, each of which would cost around \$35,000 if we were purchasing them new today. The motors control steel wires, which run underneath the show deck and pull the set pieces along their tracks. The motors are all controlled from a booth above the stage, which we call the "Lincoln Booth" (you can guess why). The Counting

House sits on 40 wheels, each of which costs around \$150. You can see how it all adds up.

The upstage side of both the Counting House and Scrooge's Bedroom are filled with all sorts of electronics, pulleys, and wires, which variously control all of the "practical lights" (lights that double as set dressing - like lamps or sconces) and also the various "magical" things that happen during *A Christmas Carol* (like doors flying open, people appearing and disappearing, and hats popping out of trunks).



By Adam Immerwahr, Associate Producer

# Victorian Holiday Recipes

Here are some traditional Victorian Christmas recipes to try in your own home!

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## CHRISTMAS PLUM PUDDING

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Mrs. Cratchit passed down her recipe for “smooth and glossy” Christmas pudding to each of her daughters, as an important (and delicious!) way to remember their family Christmas traditions.

The following recipe is likely very similar to the one Belinda Cratchit learned from her Mother. It is adapted from recipe number 1328 in Mrs. Beeton's *Book of Household Management* (1865), a compendium of the quintessential dishes of Victorian England.



Christmas Plum Pudding  
(*Book of Household Management*, 1865)

### Ingredients

- 340 gr (12 oz) raisins
- 230 gr (8 oz) currants
- 230 gr (8 oz) mixed peel
- 170 gr (6 oz) bread crumbs
- 170 gr (6 oz) suet (or other shortening)
- 4 eggs
- ½ wineglassful of brandy

### Method

- Stone and cut the raisins in halves, but do not chop them
- Wash, pick, and dry the currants, and mince the suet finely
- Cut the candied peel into thin slices, and grate down the bread into fine crumbs
- When all these dry ingredients are prepared, mix them well together
- Moisten the mixture with the eggs, which should be well beaten, and the brandy
- Stir well, that everything may be very thoroughly blended, and press the pudding into a buttered mould
- Tie it down tightly with a floured cloth
- Boil for 5 or 6 hours. It may be boiled in a cloth without a mould, and will require the same time allowed for cooking.
- When the pudding is taken out of the pot, hang it up immediately by a hook, and put a plate or saucer underneath to catch the water that will drain from it. Leave it to dry out until Christmas Day.

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## SPICED WASSAIL

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No Victorian Christmas was complete without a Wassail Bowl, a strong mulled punch made of sweetened and spiced ale or wine and garnished with roasted crab apples. The fashion was to celebrate by everyone drinking the wassail from the same cup.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 quart unsweetened apple juice
- 3 cups unsweetened pineapple juice
- 2 cups reduced calorie cranberry juice
- 1 navel orange, sliced
- 1 medium lemon, sliced
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3 whole cloves
- 1 (3 inch) stick cinnamon, broken



“The Wassail Bowl.” S.H. Edwards. Printed in the Christmas edition of the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*. December 7, 1893.

**Directions**

- In a large saucepan, combine all of the ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Discard the orange and lemon slices, cloves and cinnamon before serving.

## Fezziwig Party

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### A holiday feast for all the senses

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**All-inclusive package price is only \$60 per person.**

Fezziwig Parties will be held on December 8th and December 14th before the 7:30pm performances of the heartwarming classic *A Christmas Carol*. The evening begins at 6pm with a reception featuring:

- Catered delights from D’Angelo’s Italian Market.
- Specialty cocktails, including your favorite hot toddies.
- A festive holiday atmosphere of sights, sounds, and scents, and lots of good cheer!



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## Menu Highlights:

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- Antipasto station
- Assorted crostini and mini quiche
- Farfalle primavera
- Balsamic chicken
- Assorted Italian cookies

Make holiday planning easy this year at a party that you don't have to lift a finger to plan! Contact the Ticket Office today at 609-258-2787.

For additional information or to arrange a group of 10 or more, contact Megan Johnston, Director of Group Services at 609.258.6526 or [groups@mccarter.org](mailto:groups@mccarter.org)

## Festival of Trees

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### An elegant reception at Morven Museum & Garden

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*Morven Museum & Garden will host a pre-theater cocktail reception on **December 20th at 5pm**. Enjoy the beautiful grounds adorned with a multitude of Christmas lights and other holiday decorations, and enjoy delicious tasting tables from the caterers below. Each guest will receive a goody bag and door prizes will be announced throughout the evening.*



*Afterwards, stroll and carol your way over to McCarter Theatre for a 7:30pm performance of **A Christmas Carol**.*

Package Appropriate for Ages 12 and up

*Caterers include:*

- *Chez Alice*
- *The Brothers Moon*
- *Ruth's Chris Steak House*

- Salt Creek Grille

**BUY TICKETS**

(To order online please login to our website using the Perf Plus promo code and select Single Party Price)



Event supported by



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**Morven Holiday Package**

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Waived handling charges  
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### Groups may also be eligible for:

FREE drink coupons for everyone in your group  
FREE tickets to a performance of your choice  
Meet and greet opportunities with the cast!

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# Plot Summary

It is Christmas Eve in 19th century London, and **Ebenezer Scrooge**, the miserly owner of a successful counting house, spends yet another Christmas season trying to kill the joyful spirit of those around him. This day before Christmas finds Scrooge ignoring well-wishers, specifically his nephew **Fred**, and allowing his underpaid clerk, **Bob Cratchit**, only one day off for Christmas. As Cratchit heads home to his humble family celebration, Scrooge reminds him to be in extra early the day after Christmas.

At home, Scrooge receives a visit from the ghost of his long-dead business partner, **Jacob Marley**. The ghost explains to Scrooge that Marley is condemned to restless wandering because he did nothing good for mankind while he was alive. He tells Scrooge that there is still time to save himself from the same fate.

In an attempt to convince Scrooge to change while there is still time, Marley sends the spirits of **Christmas Past**, **Christmas Present** and **Christmas Future**. The spirits take Scrooge on three journeys: The Ghost of Christmas Past forces Scrooge to visit neglected friends, his now-dead sister and his young sweetheart, who left him when his greed became overpowering. The Ghost of Christmas Present then takes him to two homes—Cratchit's (where the youngest child, **Tiny Tim**, is ill) and Scrooge's nephew's.

In each home, Christmas is celebrated joyfully, and the families even raise their glasses in toasts to Scrooge himself. Finally, the Ghost of Christmas Future leads Scrooge to the sorrowful scene following Tiny Tim's death, and eventually to his own terrifying and lonely grave.

These chilling scenes of the future finally spur Scrooge to action. He awakes a new man and begins to celebrate life. Overflowing with his new-found Christmas cheer, Scrooge showers the Cratchits with gifts and his nephew with long-overdue love, proving that even the most miserly among us can discover the spirit of Christmas.

## Character Profiles

### Ebenezer Scrooge

An old miser driven by greed. He has no sympathy for the poor, does nothing to help his fellow man, and thinks it is foolish to celebrate Christmas.

*"If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with a "Merry Christmas" on his lips should be boiled in his own pudding and buried with a stake of holly through his heart."*

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### Bob Cratchit

Scrooge's overworked, underpaid clerk. Money is tight for him and his family, but they find strength in their love for each other and hope for the future.

*"It's not that often I get to spend the entire day with my beautiful family. With all of you together... I have everything in the world a man could possibly ask for."*

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## Jacob Marley

Scrooge and **Jacob Marley** were business partners until Marley's death seven years ago. Marley never turned from his selfish, miserly ways, and his spirit now wanders the earth in chains as punishment.

*"I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link. Yard by yard. Mark me! My spirit never walked beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole, and now weary journeys lie before me."*

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## Nephew Fred

A good-hearted, generous young man who refuses to let his Uncle Scrooge ruin his merry Christmas.

*"I always think of Christmas as a good time – a kind, charitable, pleasant time. It is the only time I know of in the year when we open our hearts freely to one another."*

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## Mr. Fezziwig

When Scrooge and Marley were young, they worked for Mr. Fezziwig as clerks. Fezziwig was a kind, generous man who held a wonderful Christmas party every year for his employees.

*"If I die penniless, I will die happy. I will have done what I wanted to do. There's more to life than money."*

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## Fan

Scrooge had little family as a child (his mother died giving birth to him, and his father was in a workhouse), but his older sister Fan loved him dearly.

*"I had to see my baby brother for Christmas!"*

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## Lily

Fred's new bride. Lily is kind and welcoming, even to Scrooge!

*"Under all that sourness I believe there's still a good man trying to get out."*

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## Belle

A beautiful, kind, but poor young girl. She and Scrooge were engaged before he learned to care only for money.

*"Little by little I have seen all joy in your life replaced by your passion for money."*

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## Mrs. Cratchit

Takes care of her four children, working hard to stretch Bob's small salary to pay for their needs. She resents Scrooge a little for his stinginess.

*"No matter where you are... or how far apart we may all be... you'll make this pudding and remember all of us together at Christmas."*

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## The Ghost of Christmas Past

Conjures up scenes from Scrooge's past, reminding him that Christmas did mean something to him once. In the McCarter production, this ghost is played by children from the Young Ensemble.

*"I told you these were the shadows of the things that have been. That they are what they are, do not blame me!"*

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## The Ghost of Christmas Present

Cheerful and lively, The Ghost of Christmas Present sprinkles the spirit of Christmas cheer on those who need it most.

*"Every Christmas, another brother or sister tries to spread happiness and Christmas cheer. We are also charged with the task of removing the causes of human misery...which explains my little visit to you."*

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## The Ghost of Christmas Future

A silent, looming spirit who shows Scrooge the dismal things to come if he does not change. In McCarter's production, this ghost is portayed by a large puppet.

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## Tiny Tim

The youngest of the Cratchit children. Although he is crippled and physically weak, he has a big heart.

*"God bless us, every one."*

# Suggested Activities and Questions

## For K-5 students:

1. Have your students read Dickens' original story of *A Christmas Carol*, or read it to them in class. (Standards 3.2 or 3.4)
2. Ask your students which characters they liked best and least in the story, and why. (Standard 1.1)
3. Ask your students why they think Scrooge became so selfish. (Standard 3.4)
4. Hold a discussion with your students about why they think some people become too interested in money and material things. Do they think this is good or bad? (Standard 6.4)
5. Discuss other holidays with your students, such as Hanukah and Kwanzaa. Make sure to mention the importance of symbols (such as a Christmas tree, a menorah, and a kinara) to each of the holidays. What other symbols can your students think of that are important to these holidays? (Standards 1.5 and 6.5)
6. Have older students research holiday traditions around the world. (Suggest that the students choose the country from which their families originated.) (Standards 1.5 and 6.5)
7. Ask your students to share some of their family holiday traditions with the class. If they did activity six, ask them to share how their own celebrations compare or contrast to those they discovered in other countries. (Standards 1.5 and 6.5)
8. Have your students create their own class holiday custom. Spread the idea around the school, and have each class share their new custom with the others. (Standards 1.5 and 6.5)

## For Middle and High School Students:

1. Have your students read Dickens' original story. Hold a discussion or have them write a short essay about the similarities and differences between Dickens' story and our production. (Standard 3.4)
2. Divide your students into groups, have them choose their favorite section of the story, and give them a chance to dramatize the scene for their classmates. Encourage them, if possible, to use simple costumes, set pieces and music to enhance their scenes. (Standard 1.2)
3. Dickens wrote many holiday stories, such as "Cricket on the Hearth" and "The Goblins Who Stole the Sexton." Ask your students to read some of Dickens' other Christmas tales. What similarities and differences did they discover between the stories and *A Christmas Carol*? (Standard 3.4)
4. Hold a discussion with your students about our society's preoccupation with money and material objects. How important are money and things to them? Do we, as a society, need to change our opinions about the importance of money? (Standard 6.4)
5. Hold a discussion with your students to compare society's treatment of the holidays (i.e., the decorations at the mall, advertisements on TV, holiday specials) with what Dickens was trying to say about Christmas in *A Christmas Carol*. (Standard 6.4)
6. What do your students think is the true meaning of the holidays? (Standard 6.4)
7. Ask your students to write their own short story or play about the meaning of the holidays. (Standard 3.3)

8. Hold a discussion with your students about holiday customs here and around the world. If you plan to have a holiday party with your class, encourage them to create a new holiday custom. (Standards 1.5 and 6. 5)

## NJ Core Curriculum Standards

The Visual and Performing Arts are considered Core Curriculum areas for the New Jersey State Department of Education. As such, the study of drama (and music, visual art, and dance) is being gradually phased into the new Elementary, Middle, and High School Proficiency Assessment. This production of *A Christmas Carol* is designed to give your students exposure to the specific Core Curriculum Standards listed below.

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### ***A Christmas Carol* and Curriculum Standards**

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**This production of *A Christmas Carol* and related study materials will provide students with specific knowledge and skills to address the following Core Curriculum Content Standards in the Arts:**

- 1.1** All students will acquire knowledge and skills that increase aesthetic awareness in dance, music, theater, and visual arts.
- 1.2** All students will refine perceptual, physical and technical skills through creating dance, music, theater, and/or visual arts.
- 1.5** All students will identify the various historical, social, and cultural influences and traditions which have generated artistic accomplishments throughout the ages and which continue to shape contemporary arts.

***A Christmas Carol* is also designed to address the following Core Curriculum Standards in Language Arts Literacy and Social Studies:**

- 3.2** All students will listen actively in a variety of situations to information from a variety of sources.
- 3.3** All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.
- 3.4** All students will read various materials and texts with comprehension and critical analysis.
- 6.4** All students will acquire historical understanding of societal ideas and forces throughout the history of New Jersey, the United States, and the world.
- 6.5** All students will acquire historical understanding of varying cultures throughout the history of New Jersey, the United States, and the world.

## Credits

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