AUDITION PACK
ABOUT A CHRISTMAS CAROL
Christmas, the most wonderful time of the year! Well, it is for everyone except the miserable Scrooge. He prefers to spend Christmas all alone in his large house, instead of celebrating with mistletoe and merriment. Bah, humbug!

But one cold, dark Christmas Eve Scrooge is surprised by the ghost of Marley, his former business partner. Marley warns Scrooge that he will be called upon by three spirits – each will take him on a mysterious and magical journey to show him the error of his ways… Can Scrooge discover the true wonder and meaning of Christmas before it’s too late?

ABOUT THE ADAPTER
Neil Duffield has written more than fifty plays which have been produced extensively throughout Britain and abroad. His play The Lost Warrior, commissioned by The Dukes Theatre, Lancaster, won the 2006 Arts Council of England Award ‘for work which displays excellence, inspiration and innovation in children’s theatre’. Neil is married to freelance theatre director Eileen Murphy and lives in Bolton.

Directed and Produced by: Mr Pengelly  
Musical Director: TBC  
Assistant Director/Props: Miss Thompson (DiR)  
Movement/Costumes: Miss Hobbs  
Hair and Make-up: Miss Chadwick  
Technical Director: Mr Lane

THE DATES

**Auditions**  
Sunday 10th September 2023, 1030-1330  
*Sign up form will be shared just before the start of the Michaelmas term. See audition page for details as to how you can best prepare*

**Rehearsals**  
Mondays (some or all cast) 1630 – 1810  
Tuesdays (principals’ rehearsals) 1630 – 1810  
Thursdays (some or all cast) 1630 – 2000  
Sundays (some or all cast) 0930 – 1430 (1530 after half term)

*A more specific rehearsal schedule will be sent to you in due course, should you be successful at the audition. You will be expected to rehearse twice a week in a smaller role and 3-4 times a week if playing a principal role. Schedules will get busier as we draw nearer to production week.*

**Sunday rehearsals**  
17th September, 24th September, 8th October, 15th October, 5th November, 12th November & 19th November.

**Half term rehearsals**  
5th November

**Tech / Dress Rehearsals**  
Sunday 3rd December (tech), Monday 4th Dec (tech/dress), Tuesday 5th Dec (dress 1), Wednesday 6th Dec (dress 2 to invited audience).

**Performances**  
Thursday 7th (1900), Friday 8th (1900) & Saturday 9th December (1430 & 1900) Hayward Theatre.

**THERE IS A THREE STRIKE RULE** – three unauthorised absences from rehearsals will result in your role being given to someone else.
ROLES AVAILABLE

Ebenezer Scrooge
Scrooge is a grumpy old man who has buried a lot of memories by focusing only on his work and material success.

Boy Scrooge
Scrooge as a child is sullen and lonely, mostly content to bury himself in books rather than engage the world around him. Will need to be a small actor, possibly played by a child from KEP.

Young Scrooge
Unlike his older self, Young Ebenezer tempers his drive to succeed with a dash of wide-eyed romance.

Jacob Marley
The ghost of Jacob Marley shows the tragic end of a life lived like Scrooge’s. He deals in heavy emotions at all times—anger and anguish mostly.

Ghost 1 – The Ghost of Christmas Past
The Ghost seems gentle and ethereal, but her questioning of Scrooge intentionally causes him to address memories he’d be happier to push aside.

Ghost 2 – The Ghost of Christmas Present
Loud and boisterous, the Ghost lives in the moment but mixes his good nature with a serious understanding of the weight of time.

Ghost 3 – The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come
Non-speaking. An enigmatic presence.

Bob Cratchit
Bob is a good-natured and hard-working man, doing his best to stay positive while supporting a large family and working for a very difficult boss.

Mrs Cratchit
Bob Cratchit’s supportive wife and mother to their large brood.

Peter
Bob Cratchit’s oldest son, on the brink of adulthood but not quite there yet.

Janet
Bob Cratchit’s younger daughter.
Martha

Bob Cratchit’s oldest child who has moved out but who makes it home for Christmas, knowing how important it is to the family.

Tiny Tim

Bob Cratchit’s son who, despite his physical challenges, still believes in everything around him. Will need to be a small actor, likely to be played by a child from KEP.

Belle

Mr. Fezziwig’s daughter.

Mr Fezziwig

Mr. Fezziwig is a huge personality who is loved by all and who wants nothing more than to share his success with everyone around him.

Mrs Fezziwig

Much like Mr. Fezziwig, Mrs. Fezziwig is a big personality who turns everything she touches into a celebration.

Little Fan

Scrooge’s Sister. Her warmth is such that she can make even Boy Scrooge’s saddest day better.

Fred

Fred is the opposite of his uncle Scrooge—upbeat and optimistic, he celebrates his life, even though he’s not well off financially.

Beth

Fred’s wife; confident and strong, a modern woman who isn’t afraid to let her voice be heard.

Ensemble

There are a number of significant speaking roles in the ensemble such as Lady 1 & Lady 2, groups of children, street urchin, Tom, Harry, Servant, Old Joe, Charwoman, Boy, Robinson Crusoe, Topper, Kathleen, Broker 1 & 2, storyteller/narrator roles and we will also need a strong choir.
AUDITIONS

Sunday 10th September 2023 – 1030–1330

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT ROLES ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?</th>
<th>AUDITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| CHOIR ROLES                      | There are a significant number of Carols in Neil Duffield’s *A Christmas Carol*. We are likely to use a small choir of strong singers for a number of these carols. If you would like to feature in the choir, you should:  
  • Prepare ONE of the two audition songs and be prepared to sing the first verse solo  
Being in the choir does not preclude you from also having a significant acting role. In addition to this song, you should prepare for one of the acting roles below. |
| CHORUS ROLES                     | There are several storyteller and ensemble roles in this production. These roles involve the opportunity to narrate some parts of the story and perhaps feature in additional ensemble moments in a non-speaking role. These roles are very important to the success of the production and are a good opportunity to develop greater confidence in performing on stage. If you would like to prepare for a chorus role, you should:  
  • Prepare the role of Boy (could be played as any gender) from Scene 2. You should prepare to be partnered with a potential Scrooge on the day of the auditions.  
  • Prepare ONE of the two audition songs and be prepared to sing the first verse as part of a small group (see above if you would also like to feature in the choir) |
| FEATURED ROLES                   | There are several featured roles in this production. These roles are essential to the telling the story of the piece and involve building strong, recognisable characters. These roles will be cast gender-blind wherever possible. If you would like to prepare for a featured role, you should:  
  • Prepare ONE of the roles in Scene 3 or 4. You could prepare with a partner if preferred but should also be prepared to work with anyone on the day of the auditions.  
  • Prepare ONE of the two audition songs and be prepared to sing the first verse as part of a small group (see above if you would also like to feature in the choir) |
| AUDITIONING FOR MARLEY OR A GHOST | Ghosts feature heavily in the play and are vital to establishing the eerie magic of the production. Actors of any gender will be considered for these roles. If you would like to audition for a as one of the ghosts, you should:  
  • Prepare the role of Marley in Scene 1. You could prepare with a partner auditioning for Scrooge if you wish but should also be prepared to work with anyone on the day of the auditions.  
  • Prepare one of the two audition songs and be prepared to sing the first verse as part of a small group (see above if you would also like to feature in the choir) |
| **AUDITIONING FOR SCROOGE** | Scrooge is the leading character and is on stage for virtually the entire performance. This is a big commitment and any actor cast in this role will need to be available for nearly every rehearsal. This will require an actor with great stamina and commitment. Double casting this role and gender-blind casting will be considered. If you would like to audition for Scrooge, you should:

- Prepare the role of Scrooge in BOTH Scene 1 and 2. You could prepare these scenes with partners if you wish but should also be prepared to work with anyone on the day of the auditions.
- Prepare ONE of the two audition songs and be prepared to sing the first verse as part of a small group (see above if you would also like to feature in the choir).

Auditions are an opportunity to demonstrate your commitment, determination and to perform. To give yourself the best chance of impressing the panel, you should be prepared to deliver audition pieces from memory. Mr Pengelly and the Drama team will be looking for those a cast that can take responsibility for preparation, respond to direction and present strong character choices. Be prepared to ‘let go’ and aim to impress.

**For practical and health & safety reasons, it may not be possible to cast everybody that audits. We want you to do well but please remember that casting decisions are final. If you want to impress, make sure you prepare well and give a strong performance.**
AUDITION

SCENES
SCENE 1: SCROOGE & GHOSTS

Marley  Ebenzer!
Scrooge  (slowly emerges from the sheet.)
Who are you?
Marley  Don't you recognise me?
Scrooge  Recognise you?
Marley  It's me. Jacob. Your partner. Jacob
Marley.
Scrooge  Marley's dead.
Marley  Well, I should have thought that was
obvious.
Scrooge  You're a ghost?

Marley  Spirit is a better word, I always think.
Scrooge  Ghosts don't exist. There's no such thing.
Marley  Don't you believe the evidence of your own
noses?
Scrooge  My senses are unreliable. Upset by under-
done potatoes.
Marley  What sort of _|__|_ you? I'm
here aren't I? Look at me. Use your eyes.
Scrooge  Indigestion - that's all you are. A bit of
uncooked beef. A lot of mustard. Underdone
potatoes. There's more gravy about you than grave.
Humbug! I say to you! Humbug!
Marley  Humbug is it? Humbug? I'll give you
Humbug! (He pounds away on the piano.)
Humbug! Humbug! Humbug!
(Scrooge is terrified. Covers his ears.)
Scrooge  Stop it! Please! Stop!

Marley continues to pound away.

Marley  Uncooked beef am I?
Scrooge  I'm sorry! I apologise!
Marley  A lot of mustard!
Scrooge  I'll never say it again!
Marley  Underdone potatoes!
Scrooge  I believe you! I believe you!
Marley  What am I?
Scrooge  A ghost! You're a ghost!
Marley  And what's my name?
Scrooge  Marley! You're Marley! Jacob Marley!

Marley finally stops hammering on the piano. Scrooge
uncovers his ears.

Marley  Good. I'm glad we've managed to sort that
one out.

Scrooge stares at Marley.
SCENE 2: SCROOGE & CHORUS ROLE

Scrooge  Do you hear me, Jacob? I'm alive! I feel light as a feather. As merry as a schoolboy. I'm as giddy as a drunken man! And all thanks to you! A Merry Christmas to you, Jacob! – If it is Christmas. How long was I with the ghosts? Hours? Days? A week? I don't even know what month it is. I don't know anything any more. Nothing at all. I'm like a baby. But who cares! What's it matter? I'd rather be a baby. A Merry Christmas to everybody! Yo-ho hilli-ho! A Merry Christmas! Chirrup! Chirrup!

On the lower level a young boy passes by. Underscoring ends.

Scrooge (calling down to him) Hello there! Hello, my fine young fellow!

Boy  Who? Me?
Scrooge  What's today?
Boy  Eh?
Scrooge  Today! What day is it today?
Boy  Today? ... It's Christmas Day!
Scrooge  Christmas Day ... So I haven't missed it. All three ghosts came in one night. Of course they did. They can do what they like. Of course they can ... Hello, my fine young fellow! Do you know the poulterer's in the next street but one, at the corner?
Boy  I should hope I do.
Scrooge  An intelligent boy. A remarkable boy! Do you know whether they’ve sold the prize turkey that was hanging up there? Not the little prize – the big one!
Boy  What, the one as big as me?
Scrooge  What a delightful boy! It's a pleasure to talk to him. Yes, my buck!
Boy  It's hanging there now.
Scrooge  It is?... Go and buy it!
Boy  Buy it?
Scrooge (giving him money) Buy it! Go and buy it! And tell them to bring it here, so I can direct them where to take it. Come back with the man and I'll give you a shilling.
Boy  A whole shilling!
Scrooge  Come back in less than five minutes and I'll give you half a crown! (The boy shoots off at top speed.) What a day! What a day!
SCENE 3: FEATURED ROLES (Option 1)

Young Scrooge I promise you, Belle. My feelings towards you have not changed.
Belle With all my heart, I wish that were true.
Young Scrooge It is true.
Belle I know what I feel, Ebenezer. Things are different between us. Look me in the eye and tell me they’re not.
Young Scrooge What’s wrong with you? Don’t you want us to be married?
Belle There was a time when I wanted nothing more.
Young Scrooge Then what? Why do you doubt me so?
Belle We have to be honest with each other. ... There’s another love in your life.
Young Scrooge What love? I have no other love. How can you accuse me of such a thing?
Belle I’m talking about the love of money.
Young Scrooge ... Money?
Belle It was never like this when we were first together. You were a different person then.
Young Scrooge I was hardly more than a boy. A humble apprentice.
SCENE 4: FEATURED ROLE (Option 2)

Broker 2  What'd he die of?
Broker 1  Haven't a clue. The old snout had a hide
        like boot leather. I thought he'd never die.
Broker 2  Was he ever alive — that's the question.
        Any idea what he's done with his money?
Broker 1  Taken it with him most likely. Not left it
to me that's for sure. Allied Cotton! A hundred at
eight and a penny!
Broker 2  Two hundred at eight and three!
Broker 1  Two fifty at eight and six!
Broker 2  Five hundred at eight and nine!
Broker 1  Seven fifty at eight and eleven!
Broker 2  A thousand at nine shillings!
Broker 1 (losing out again) Damn!!
(They scribble in their notebooks.)
Broker 2  When's the funeral?
Broker 1  Search me. It'll be a cheap one I know that
        — can't think of a single person who'll go.
Broker 2  Maybe we should volunteer and make it a
        party.
Broker 1  Fine with me — so long as there's a free
        lunch.
Broker 2  Paid for by that old money-grubber? He'd
        leap out of his coffin in a fit of fury.
Broker 1 (sending up Scrooge) 'I don't make merry
        myself and I see no reason why I should pay for
        scroungers and idlers to make merry!'

They both laugh.
AUDITION SONGS
SONG 1: GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN

1. God rest ye merry, gentlemen, let no thing you dismay,
   Re - mem - ber Christ our Sa - vior was born on Christ - mas Day;
   To save us all from Satan's pow' r when we were gone a - stray.

2. In Beth - le - hem, in Is - ra - el, this bless - ed Babe was born.
   And laid with - in a man - ger up - on this bless - ed morn;
   The which His mo - ther Ma - rye did no - thing take in scorn.

3. From God our heav'n - ly Fa - ther a bless - ed an - gel came;
   And un - to cer - tain shep - herds brought ti - dings of the same;
   To free all those who trust in Him from Satan's pow' r and might.

4. "Fear not, then," said the an - gel, "Let no thing you a - bright
   This day is born a Sa - vior of a pure Vir - gin bright,
   And went to Beth - le - hem and brought this bless - ed Babe to find.

5. The shep - herds at those ti - dings re - joiced much in mind,
   And left their flocks a - feed - ing in tem - pest, storm and wind;
   O ti - dings of com - fort and joy, com - fort and joy; O ti - dings of com - fort and joy.
SONG 2: IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER

1. In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
   Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
   Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
   In the bleak midwinter, a stable place equipped;

2. Our God, Heavn can not hold Him, our earth sustained;
   Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign;
   In the bleak midwinter a stable place supplied;
   Our God, Heavn can not hold Him, our earth sustained;

3. Enough for Him, whom earth said must and may;
   Breast full of milk, and a man full of hay;
   But His mother on holy, in her maiden bliss;
   Breast full of milk, and a man full of hay;

4. Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
   Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
   Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
   Seraphim and cherubim thronged the air;

5. What can I give Him, poor as I am?
   If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
   In the bleak midwinter long ago,
   In the bleak midwinter, long ago;

The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ,
Oh and ass and camel which adore;
Worshipped the beloved with a kiss;
Yet what can I give Him: give my heart.