



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

WHAT ROLES ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?	AUDITION
CHOIR ROLES	<p>There are a significant number of Carols in Neil Duffield's <i>A Christmas Carol</i>. 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare ONE of the two audition songs and be prepared to sing the first verse solo <p>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.</p>
CHORUS ROLES	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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)
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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 auditions. 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 Ebenezer!
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
 senses?
Scrooge My senses are unreliable. Upset by under-
 done potatoes.
Marley What sort of nincompoop are 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 blot 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 blot 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.

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)

...they get a more business dealings with them.

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

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$\text{♩} = 160$



1. God rest ye mer - ry, gen - tle - men, let no - thing you dis - may,
 2. In Beth - le - hem, in Is - ra - el, this bless - ed Babe was born,
 3. From God our heav'n - ly Fa - - ther a bless - ed an - gel came;
 4. "Fear not, then," said the an - - gel, "Let no - thing you a - fright
 5. The shep - herds at those ti - - dings re - jo - iced much in mind,

Re - mem - ber Christ our Sa - - vior was born on Christ - mas Day;
 And laid with - in a man - - ger up - on this bless - ed morn;
 And un - to cer - tain shep - - herds brought ti - dings of the same;
 This day is born a Sa - - vior of a pure Vir - gin bright,
 And left their flocks a - feed - - ing in tem - pest, storm and wind,

To save us all from Sa - tan's pow'r when we were gone a - - stray.
 The which His mo - ther Ma - - ry did no - thing take in scorn.
 How that in Beth - le - - hem was born the Son of God by name.
 To free all those who trust in Him from Sa - tan's pow'r and might."
 And went to Beth - l'em straight - aw - ay this bless - ed Babe to find.

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

$\text{♩} = 100$

1. In the bleak mid - win - - ter, frost - - y wind made moan,
 2. Our God, Heav'n can - not hold Him, nor _____ earth sus - - tain;
 3. E - - nough for Him, whom cher - u - bim, wor - - ship night and day,
 4. An - gels and arch - an - - gels may have ga - thered there,
 5. What _____ can I give Him, poor _____ as I am?

Earth stood hard as i - - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
 Heav'n and earth shall flee a - way when He comes to reign.
 Breast - u - ful of milk, and a man - ger - ful of hay; En -
 Cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim thronged the air;
 If I were a shep - - herd, I would bring a lamb;

Snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow on snow,
 In the bleak mid - - win - - ter a sta - ble place suf - - ficed
 ough for Him, whom an - - - gels fall _____ down be - - fore,
 But His mo - ther on - - - ly, in her mai - den bliss,
 If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;

In the bleak mid - - win - - ter, long a - - go.
 The Lord God Al - - migh - - ty, Je - - - - sus Christ.
 Ox and ass and ca - - mel which a - - dore.
 Wor - shiped the be - - lov - - ed with a kiss.
 Yet what can I give Him: give my heart.