



The Guide to Musical Theatre

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

A Musical in One Act, 14 Scenes. Book by Mike Ockrent and Lynn Ahrens. Based on the novel of the same name by Charles Dickens. Music by Alan Menken. Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens.

Paramount Theatre, Madison Square Garden, New York: Opened 1st December, 1994; closed 1st January, 1995 (71 performances)



STORY

The musical opens at the Royal Exchange. "London Town Carol" is sung, and lamps glow. Christmas is near and all are awaiting the early close of the Exchange so the holiday can officially start. From bankers to charwomen, all wish each other "A Jolly Good Time," looking forward to the holiday fun ahead. Mr. Smythe and his daughter, Grace, enter looking for Ebenezer Scrooge, hoping he will give them a bit more time to pay their mortgage. In a draft of cold wind, Scrooge enters with his clerk, Bob Cratchit. Mr. Smythe approaches Scrooge to ask for more time to pay--he needs money for his wife's funeral. But Scrooge denies the request, and tells little Grace, "You'll learn soon enough, child, that Christmas is a HUMBBUG!" When asked for charity for the poor, Scrooge replies, "Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?" Cratchit tells him about his sickly youngest son, Tiny Tim, but Scrooge pays little mind to him and grudgingly gives him Christmas off. Scrooge believes that charity has "Nothing To Do With Me," as he ventures home through the streets, encountering some of the denizens of the city and treating them all rudely. The funeral of Mrs. Smythe passes, giving Scrooge a chill.

We travel to Cratchit's humble home, where Bob Cratchit and his son, Tiny Tim, set off to buy the makings of their meagre Christmas feast. Bob tells his son that "You Mean More To Me" than anything. Meanwhile Scrooge meets his nephew Fred, who invites him for Christmas dinner. Scrooge has never met Fred's wife, Sally. Fred assures his uncle he wants nothing from him, but Scrooge sends him on his way.

Scrooge's harsh treatment of his fellow Londoners includes a sandwich board man, advertising a Christmas pantomime, a blind old hag, and a lamplighter (all of whom we will meet again as the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present, and Christmas Yet To Be). He refuses to buy tickets to the pantomime, refuses to help the lamplighter, and refuses to give alms to the blind old hag.

When he arrives at his home he has a vision--the face of his deceased business partner, Jacob Marley. Later, in his parlour, the Ghost of Marley materializes, bound in chains that he, himself, forged. Marley conjures up all the mournful ghosts of greedy former business associates, who scare Scrooge silly and try to convince him to change his ways ("Link By Link"). Marley tells Scrooge that he will be visited by three ghosts "who yet may stop you ending up like me."

The clock chimes One, and Scrooge is awakened by a visit from the Ghost of Christmas Past (who looks remarkably like the Lamplighter). The ghost sings of "The Lights of Long Ago" and shows Scrooge scenes from his past: his father being taken to jail for non-payment of debts, and his separation from his mother and his beloved sister, Fan. Next we see Scrooge at twelve saving every cent he earns, working in a boot factory. The young boy writes to his sister Fan and dreams of "A Place Called Home" but Fan will die giving birth to Fred. Next, Scrooge is reminded how joyous he used to be at "Mr. Fezziwig's Annual Christmas Ball."

Here Scrooge realizes that an employer can make his workers happy. While the festivities continue, Scrooge watches his younger self, still filled with light, as he propose to his beloved Emily.

Young Scrooge and Marley go into business, growing more ruthless as they become more and more successful. They turn on their former benefactor, jolly Mr. Fezziwig, and demand he repay a debt to them. Later, Emily, breaks off her engagement with Ebenezer, returning her gold engagement ring, which she feels he will value more than her. Desperate to end these painful visions, Scrooge chases the Ghost of Christmas Past away, and is left desolate and alone.

The clock strikes Two, and Scrooge is visited by the Ghost of Christmas Present (Sandwich board Man.) The ghost presents Scrooge with a lavish array of Christmas treats which all come to life and dance. Next the ghost whisks Scrooge off to Bob Cratchit's house where the family enjoys "Christmas Together." "Christmas Together" continues with a visit to Fred's house, where everyone toasts Scrooge, despite his absence; finally, all of London celebrates love, friendship, and family--the true joys of Christmas, "together, all over the earth." The ghost shows Scrooge how fragile Tiny Tim is; then he reveals two more children in a desperate state of need: they are Ignorance and Want. When asked if Tiny Tim will live, Scrooge is told that if these shadows remain unaltered by the future, the child will die.

Scrooge begs to know what he can do to change the future, but the clock strikes Three and he is whisked to St. Paul's graveyard by the ominous Ghost of Christmas Yet To Be. (Blind Old Hag). Gravediggers are digging a grave. Scrooge doesn't know who has died.

A corpse is unceremoniously dumped from its bed while the undertakers strip the body of its clothes and bedclothes. Scrooge sees the Cratchit family grieving over the grave of Tiny Tim. Finally he sees his own name on a gravestone, and understands that he will die alone and unmourned. He vows to change his ways, "Yesterday, Tomorrow and Today." Scrooge has a miraculous vision of children singing like angels ("God Bless Us Every One"), but his joy is interrupted by the ghost, who tries to wrap him in a shroud and wrestle him into his own grave.

It is suddenly Christmas morning and Scrooge wakes up, wrestling with his own bed sheets! Thrilled to realize he hasn't missed Christmas, he gives a young boy money to buy a prize turkey. Dancing through the streets of London, Scrooge sings "let it all have to do with me!" as he hands out charity, forgives Mr. Smythe his debt, and amazes the Lamplighter, Blind Old Hag and Sandwich board Man with his generosity; then he goes out into the audience, giving out candies and treats.

Scrooge delivers the prize turkey to the Cratchits and promises to raise Bob's salary and help his struggling family. Carrying Tiny Tim on his shoulders, Scrooge goes to his nephew's house hoping to be allowed to come to dinner. Fred and Sally sing, "Welcome home, Uncle Scrooge, welcome home to family."

It starts to snow and everyone sings a reprise of "Christmas Together," and all build a giant snowman. Tiny Tim calls out, "And God bless us, every one!" And the musical ends with the song, "God Bless Us Every One"--"Star by star up above, and kindness by human kindness, light this world with your love/And God bless us every one."

MUSICAL NUMBERS

1. The Years Are Passing By - Gravedigger
2. Jolly, Rich and Fat (A Jolly Good Time) - Charity Men, Smythe Family, Businessmen, Wives, Children
3. Nothing to Do With Me - Scrooge, Cratchit
4. Street Song (Nothing to Do With Me) - People of London, Scrooge, Fred, Jonathan, Sandwich Board Man, Lamplighter, Blind Hag, Jack Smythe
5. Link By Link - Ghost of Jacob Marley, Scrooge, Ghosts
6. The Lights of Long Ago (Part 1) - Lamplighter
7. God Bless Us, Everyone - Scrooge's Mother, Fan (aged 6), Scrooge (aged 8)
8. A Place Called Home - Scrooge (aged 12), Fan (aged 10), Scrooge
9. Mr. Fezziwig's Annual Christmas Ball - Fezziwig, Mrs Fezziwig, Guests
10. A Place Called Home (reprise) - Emily, Scrooge (aged 18), Scrooge
11. The Lights of Long Ago (Part 2) - Scrooge (aged 18), Marley as a Young Man, Emily, People from

Scrooge's Past

12. Abundance and Charity - Ghost of Christmas Present, Scrooge, Christmas Presents
13. Christmas Together - Tiny Tim, Cratchit, Mrs Cratchit, Cratchit Children, Fred, Fred's Wife, Scrooge, People of London
14. Dancing on Your Grave - Grave Diggers, Ghost of Christmas Future, Minks, Businessmen, Mrs Mopps, Undertakers, Old Joe, Mr Smythe, Cratchit
15. Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow - Scrooge, Angels, People of London
16. The Years Are Passing By (reprise) - Jonathan
17. Nothing to Do With Me (reprise) - Scrooge
18. Christmas Together (reprise) - People of London
19. God Bless Us, Everyone (Finale) - Company

SCENES AND SETTINGS

The action takes place in London, 1880.

- Scene 1: A Graveyard near St. Paul's Cathedral, Christmas Eve.
- Scene 2: The Royal Exchange.
- Scene 3: The Street.
- Scene 4: Scrooge's House.
- Scene 5: Scrooge's Bed Chamber.
- Scene 6: The Law Courts.
- Scene 7: The Factory.
- Scene 8: Fezziwig's Banking House.
- Scene 9: Montage.
- Scene 10: A Starry Night.
- Scene 11: All Over London.
- Scene 12: The Graveyard.
- Scene 13: Scrooge's Bed Chamber.
- Scene 14: The Street, Christmas Day.

CAST (in order of their appearance):

Punch and Judy Man	Fred	Fan at 10
Punch and Judy Woman	Jonathan	Fezziwig
Organ Grinder	Lamplighter	Scrooge at 18
Grave Digger	Blind Hag	Marley, as a young man
Mr. Smythe	Mrs. Mops	Mrs. Fezziwig
Jack Smythe	Ghost of Jacob Marley	Emily
Grace Smythe	Ghost of Christmas Past	Ghost of Christmas Present
Scrooge	Judge	Tiny Tim
Cratchit	Scrooge at 8	Mrs. Cratchit
Charity Men	Fan at 6	The Cratchit Children
Old Joe	Scrooge's Mother	Sally, Fred's wife:
Match Girl	Scrooge's Father	Undertakers
Street Urchins and Children	Mr. Kent	Ghost of Christmas Future
Sandwich Board Man	Scrooge at 12	Business Men, Ghosts, Gifts and the People of London

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

- Blind Old Hag / Ghost of Christmas Future - A beautiful, and terrifying wrath, the Ghost of Christmas Future is strong and silent as she shows Scrooge what will happen to him and those around him if he continue down the path he is currently treading. (Female, 50-65 yrs old - Range: A3 - G5)
- Emily - Scrooge's fiancé from when they were young. She is a beautiful girl, not impressed or in need of money. (Female, 18-25 yrs old - Range: A3 - B5)
- Fred - Scrooge's nephew and only living relative. He is a pleasant young man who believes in the good a joyful Christmas spirit can make in the world. (Male, 25-35 yrs old - Range: A3 - F5)
- Ghost of Christmas Past - An ever cheerful, sprightly ghost who comes back with the history book of Scrooge's past to show him the events that led to his current state. Actor doubles as Lamplighter. (Male, 40-60 yrs old - Range: A3 - G5)
- Ghost of Christmas Present - A jovial, larger-than-life ghost who comes back to show Scrooge all the joy, love, and celebration he his missing out on while those around him celebrate Christmas. Actor doubles as Sandwichboard Man. (Male, 35-45 yrs old - Range: A3 - G5)
- Marley - Scrooge's former business partner who, before his death, was exactly like Scrooge. Comes back as a ghost in chains to warn Scrooge of how his life decisions will bind him in the afterlife. (Male, 45-55 yrs old - Range: A3 - A5)
- Mr. Cratchit - A father and husband who cares deeply for his family, particularly his youngest son. He works hard to provide for them but is mistreated by his employer, Scrooge.
(Male, 30-40 yrs old Range: A3 - E5)
- Mr. Fezziwig - A portly, jolly man who used to throw a huge Christmas party every year for the community. He was Scrooge's first boss and after teaching him all he knew, he became deeply disappointed in the man Scrooge became. (Male, 55-65 yrs old - Range: A3 - B5)
- Mrs. Cratchit - Tiny Tim's mother and Mr. Cratchit's wife. She is a loving mother who tries to provide the best for her children with what she's got. (Female, 30-40 yrs old - Range: A3 - E5)
- Mrs. Fezziwig - The consummate hostess and Mr. Fezziwig's wife, she loved to help throw the Christmas party every year. She is prideful. (Female, 50-60 yrs old - Range: A3 - A5)
- Scrooge - A man who lost his father to creditors as a kid and has grown up heeding his father's advice to save his money. Until he realizes how terrible he's become, he is grumpy, unsympathetic man and has no time for anyone or anything. (Male, 45-65 yrs old - Range: A3 - G5)
- Tiny Tim - Mr. and Mrs. Cratchit's youngest son. He is crippled and sick, but is the definition of loving Christmas spirit. He constantly reminds his family that as long as they all have each other, they will be happy. (Male, 9-12 yrs old - Range: A3 - E5)

Ensemble - CHARITY ELVES; BANKERS; STREET VENDORS; SAILORS; GHOSTS; JAILERS; CLERKS; MONKS

