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Timeless Scrooge! Comes Back To Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini



John Blytt (Scrooge) and Joel Braunstein (Tiny Tim)
Photo Stu Selland

The holiday season just wouldn't be the same without Scrooge, without the live performance of the story that makes us cry, and makes us laugh. The musical retelling of A Christmas Carol is the kind of family favorite that has the lovely smell of good times, like the Thanksgiving Turkey or the Christmas Pudding. At Town Hall Theater in Lafayette, the job of keeping it fresh this time around fell into the capable hands of Jessica Richards, Associate Artistic Director at the California Shakespeare Festival. "Seeing the community come together each year to celebrate the holidays with friends and family is what Town Hall Theatre is all about," comments Artistic Director Clive Worsley. And this year in particular, he and Richards believe the classic story is more relevant than ever.

"We have several new staff members who are reenergizing the whole team, keeping it fresh," says the returning Richards, "and the new choreography by Emily Morrison keeps everyone on their toes." Richards says that each year she comes back to the play a different person and sees different things as being important. "This year, with everything that is happening around the world, it struck me how different Scrooge is from everyone else around him," she says.

Worsley, who also returns as an actor in the play, experienced a similar shift in awareness. "A lot of our fellow Americans and people around the world are suffering," he said, "Scrooge's story is important for all of us, as we have a duty to care for those less fortunate than ourselves. The idea that someone who feeds on other's suffering could be transformed, makes me confident in the future. We need to remain forward- looking and hopeful, and it is a great time for doing this."

Again this year, the musical will feature memorable songs such as "Thank You Very Much," "I Hate People," and "Christmas Children." "Whether you grew up with the movie like I did, or this is your first experience with this heartwarming and fun show, you are absolutely going to

have a blast," says Worsley. Scrooge is played by John Blytt, Clive Worsley is Bob Crachit, Randy Anger is the Ghost of Christmas Present and young Joel Braunstein is Tiny Tim.

Scrooge! runs December 3-18th, with previews on December 1 and 2. It is rated PG (due to spooky ghosts) and is about two hours long. For tickets, contact Town Hall Theatre at 283-1557, or purchase online at www.TownHallTheatre.com.

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