



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Sarah Mills Bacha
614.563.1066

CATCO's 21st Century Retelling of *A Christmas Carol* Returns Dec. 3-21

Timeless yuletide classic is merrily reinvented through the use of music, puppetry

CATCO favorite Ken Erney returns in the role of Scrooge

There is Ebenezer Scrooge, Mr. and Mrs. Cratchit, Jacob Marley, the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future, and, of course, Tiny Tim, but beyond the memorable characters and classic story of redemption, CATCO and CATCO is Kids' production of *A Christmas Carol* Dec 3-21 breathes new life into the Dickens story everyone grew up with.

"Based on high acclaim last season, we are thrilled to revive this new creation by the Tony-award winning writer of *The 39 Steps* (produced at CATCO in spring 2012). Through the use of puppets, masks and a cappella music, this version is *A Christmas Carol* like people have never experienced it before and the perfect introduction for youngsters who are experiencing it for the first time," said Joe Bishara, CATCO associate producing director and the director of *A Christmas Carol*. "

To encourage parents to make the show a family outing, CATCO and CATCO is Kids are offering a special price of \$15 for kids 18 and under and \$25 for adults. All performances will be performed at the Vern Riffe Center Studio One Theatre, 77 S. High St.

"A not to miss holiday treat," says *Columbus Underground*, while *The Columbus Dispatch* calls CATCO's *A Christmas Carol* "A treasure of holiday theatricality." According to *Stage Magazine*, "No matter how many times you've experienced *A Christmas Carol*, this version is not one to miss."

The play, adapted by Patrick Barlow, features seven actors who portray all of the main characters in this sometimes comic, ultimately moving, adaptation. CATCO's acting apprentices are members of the chorus, as well as the cast; Matt Clemens returns as music director.

Cast members are apprentice Beth Conley (Chorus/Hermione Bentham/Spirit of Christmas Past/Constance/Mrs. Cratchit); Ken Erney (Ebenezer Scrooge); Jeff Horst (Frederick, Mr. Grimes, George, All Five Cratchit Children, Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come); apprentice Annie Huckaba (Chorus/Isabella); Dani Mann (Mrs. Lack/Lavinia Bentham/Fanny/Spirit of Christmas Present/Fred's Housemaid); apprentice Andrew Protopapas (Chorus/Tiny Tim/Child Scrooge/Mr. Fezziwig); and Ben Sostrom (Bob Cratchit/Jacob Marley/Young Scrooge).

Conley, graduated from Wright State University with a bachelor of fine arts in acting/musical theatre and has performed as Ermengarde in *Hello, Dolly!*, Janet in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and Tracy in *Hairspray*; Erney, a longtime CATCO actor, has appeared in *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *The Seafarer*, *True West*, *Orphans* *Glengarry Glen Ross* and *The Normal Heart*; Horst was last seen on the CATCO stage in *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* and performed in the one-man show *Fully Committed* and *Forbidden Broadway's Greatest Hits: Vol. 1*; and Huckaba

counts among her acting credits Rona in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, Sally in *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*, Madame Arcati in *Blithe Spirit*, and Cathy in *The Last Five Years*.

They are joined by Mann, who appeared in CATCO productions of *The Fantasticks* and *The Grapes of Wrath* and counts as her favorite performances roles in *Falsettos*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *The Diviners* and *Closer Than Ever!*; Protopapas, whose acting credits include Marius (*Les Misérables* – Star Players Theatre), Robert (*Company* – Capital University), and Einstein (*Picasso at the Lapin Agile* – Capital University); and Sostrom, a previous CATCO acting apprentice, who appeared in Available Light Theatre Company's production of *bobrauschenbergamerica* and Actors Theatre of Columbus' *Twelfth Night*.

Clemens, who has worked as an actor, singer, conductor, pianist, music director, director and composer, most recently performed in CATCO's season opener of *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* and was music director of *Forever Plaid*.

Bishara has worked at regional theatres in Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and Florida as an actor, director, producer, and administrator. At CATCO, he directed *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, *Revenge of the Space Pandas*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Rude Mechanicals*, and *Forbidden Broadway's Greatest Hits: Vol. 1*, and appeared in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Forbidden Broadway*, *The Story of My Life* and *Evil Dead The Musical*. Other acting credits include *Titanic*, *Forbidden Broadway: SVU*, *The Rocky Horror Show* and *The Last Five Years*. Additional directing credits include *The Spitfire Grill*, *Madeline's Christmas*, *Bat Boy: The Musical*, and *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, *The House at Pooh Corner* and *the Wind in the Willows*, *Encyclopedia Brown*, *Peter and the Wolf*, *Beauty and the Beast (Isabella e la Bestia)*, and *School House Rock Live!*

CATCO's 30th season is sponsored by support from The Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund the theatre with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, education excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans, and supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

CATCO also appreciates the support of the Grace K. and Robert L. Rohe and James W. Overstreet Funds of The Columbus Foundation, assisting donors and others in strengthening our community for the benefit of all of its citizens, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council, supporting the city's artists and arts organizations since 1973. Other supporters include The Shubert Foundation Inc. and Nationwide Insurance Foundation.

Season sponsor is L Brands; the season partner is the Columbus Metropolitan Library. For more information, visit catcoistheatre.org.

Preview (Discounted Tickets)/Opening Night Performances

There are two previews for *A Christmas Carol*, Wednesday, Dec. 3, at 11:00 a.m., and Thursday, Dec. 4, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$11.50 for the 11 a.m. performance, and \$25 (adults), \$15 (kids 18 and under) for the 7:30 p.m. show. The opening performance is Friday, Dec. 5, at 8 p.m.

\$11@11 Matinees

For *A Christmas Carol*, there will be three \$11@11 performances: Wednesday, Dec. 3, 10 and 17.

CATCO's \$11@11 is an offering for theatregoers who want to see a play mid-week (Wednesday) and mid-day (11 a.m.) at a great price (\$11 plus a 50-cent restoration fee).

Ticket/Parking Information

Tickets for all other performances of *A Christmas Carol* are \$25 for adults and \$15 for kids 18 and under.

Students may purchase \$15 tickets two hours before any performance based on availability and valid I.D. A limited number of \$20 rush tickets are available beginning two hours prior to curtain for 30 minutes only. All tickets can be purchased at the box office at 39 E. State St. next to the Ohio theatre, by calling 614.469.0939, visiting ticketmaster.com or calling or visiting any central Ohio Ticketmaster location. Performances are in the Studio Theatres at the Vern Riffe Center, located at 77 S. High St., in Downtown Columbus at the corner of State and High streets. Attached parking is available in the Riffe Center garage, which is entered from Front Street.

Upcoming shows are:

CATCO

- ***Master Class***
By Terrance McNally
In association with Opera Columbus
Feb. 11-March 1, 2015
- ***The Final Table***
By Herb Brown
April 8-26, 2015

CATCO is Kids

- ***Go, Dog. Go!***
Adapted for the stage by Steven Dietz and Allison Gregory from the book by P.D. Eastman
Jan. 16-25, 2015
- ***The Jungle Book***
By Steven C. Anderson, adapted from the book by Rudyard Kipling
March 6-15, 2015

About CATCO

CATCO is central Ohio's professional Equity theatre company, providing quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatre organization has adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development. For more information, visit catcoistheatre.org. Together, CATCO and CATCO is Kids provide quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatres have adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development.

CATCO Mission Statement

Theatre is a shared experience that illuminates the mysteries of our humanity. Its magic has the power to transform us whether on stage, in the classroom or in our diverse communities. CATCO creates theatre that delights, challenges, and transports.

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