

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LUBBOCK THIS WEEKEND

Around Town

Dec. 5-Dec. 11, 1997

Casting call

Garza Theater to hold auditions for 'Anastasia'
See Story, Page 3

Music scene

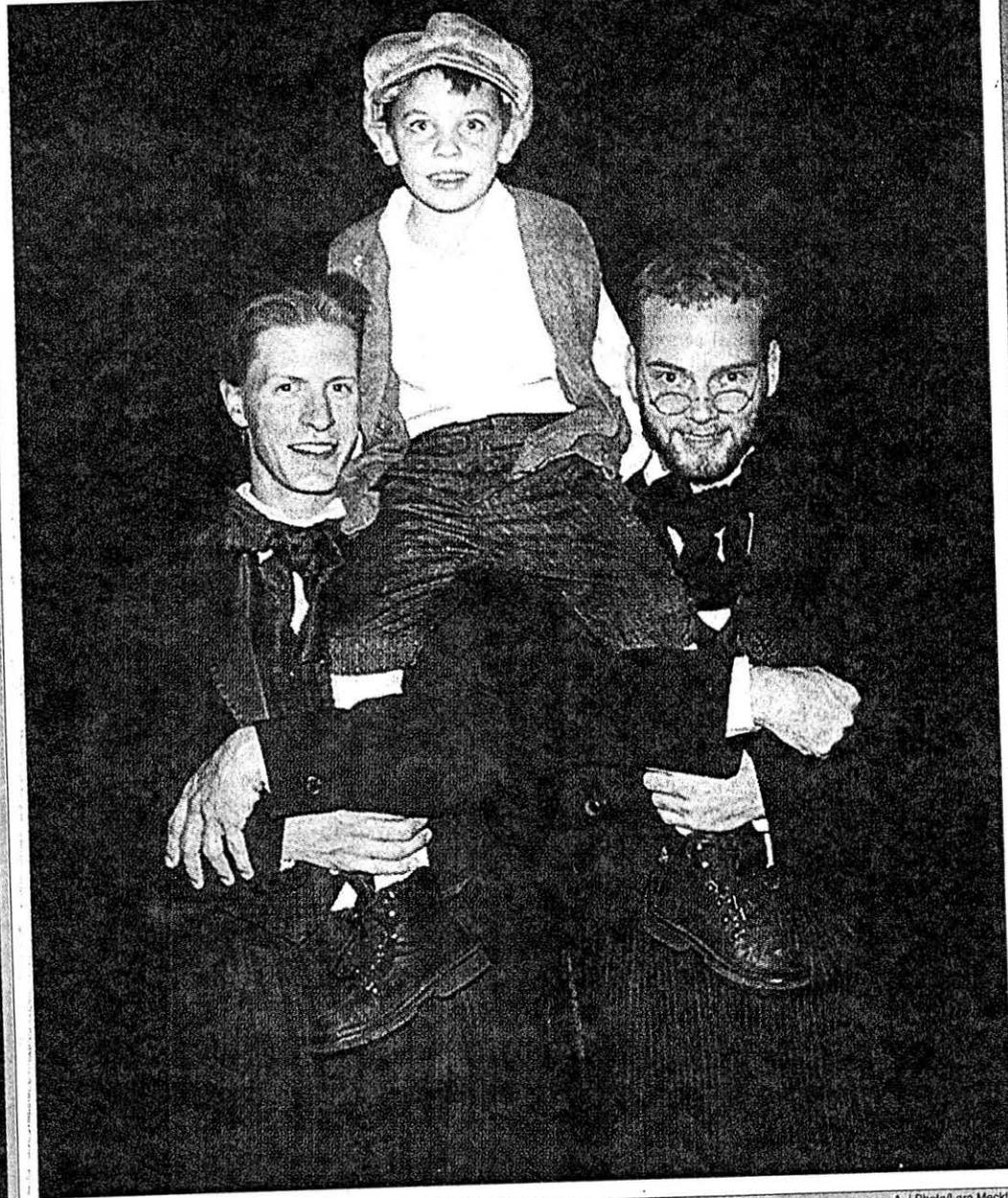
Clubs, other venues offer variety of entertainment
See Music Scene, Pages 6-7

In concert

Tech's gospel choir to perform at mall
See Calendar, Page 8

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People Meeting People	12



A-J Photo/Lara Meckless

TEXAS TECH STAGES CHALLENGING, INSPIRING 'CAROL' ADAPTATION
Tiny Tim (Aaron Smith), center, receives a boost from Bob Cratchit (Ryan Barbe), left, and Scrooge (Brian Haimbach) in "A Christmas Carol." See review, Page 2

LUBBOCK AVALANCHE-JOURNAL

on the COVER

Tech's 'Christmas Carol' challengingly entertaining

By WILLIAM KERNS
A-J Entertainment Editor

With apologies to Tiny Tim Cratchit, God bless us, everyone ... but especially Christopher J. Markle, whose adaptation of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" has raised the bar for the many collegiate and community theaters who continue to (privately) consider the holiday classic an easily produced cash cow.

This is the second year that Markle's adaptation has been staged at the Texas Tech University Theatre and, under the able guidance of director Kara Wooten, there is no tampering with Dickens' holiday message. Ebenezer Scrooge, a personification of an attitude or mood of the times, does indeed recognize the error of his ways and pledge to keep Christmas in his heart.

But this remains a darker, stylized and more literal adaptation designed to challenge as much as entertain. Frankly, it is not the sort of production one readily recommends for smaller children, and for that reason alone parents may wish to figuratively drive a stake of holly through Wooten's heart. But for those willing to give as much as the cast, the production delivers huge entertainment dividends.

This is not avant garde, experimental theater as much as it is stylized, with actors at times portraying even the inanimate objects (a swinging door here, a hat rack with attitude there) and dialogue even finding the cast trading the occasional "he said" in an effort to further illuminate Dickens' prose.

And for those who also saw an

THEATER REVIEW

otherwise spectacular 1996 production in which Tiny Tim was represented by a hobbyhorse, the current production, with charming young Aaron Smith as Tiny Tim, is an improvement.

Nitpickers may point to Brian Haimbach, whose delivery and physicality as Ebenezer Scrooge is on target but whose projection is lacking at times.

On the other hand, Scrooge also must be accepted as a symbol for possible human redemption. And Haimbach is to be commended for his character's gradual personality shift, signifying guilt and regret before a final giddy transformation.

Give credit to lighting designer Tayva Pew for capturing a mood. This production boasts an elaborate set by Frederick B. Christoffel and wonderful period costumes by Joan St. Germain, not to mention backdrops that subtly capture the aura of 19th century London and the occasional dream state.

Minimalism, this is not. Yet it is Pew's lighting that dictates emotions, the frigidity of a heartless counting house, the frightfulness of a door knocker that truly does take on a ghostly appearance.

Wooten adds to the dramatic effect by making eerie use of an opening in the stage floor - more of the grave than gravy, if



Kara Wooten
Directs Tech production

characters. To its credit, the entire cast works together wonderfully, quickly changing scenes and moods as the ghosts grant a believable and telling tour of Scrooge's past and possible fate.

That said, standouts include Julie Mitchell as Belle, Michelle Mellgren in several roles and Patrick Wakefield as Fred.

Is Tech's "A Christmas Carol" a family play? Certainly it is designed to be, intended to be.

And yet it is something more: an intelligent production - frightening occasionally, demanding of attention at all times you will, when used for entrances and exits.

What's more, her risky decision to make the opening a constant presence also pays off; it

serves as a reminder, a warning, even during more lighthearted scenes when the cast must carefully dance around it.

Rest assured, the basic story remains familiar. The greedy and heartless Ebenezer Scrooge, who even likes the dark because it is cheap, sees no need to help his fellow man, at Christmas time or any other time.

But one holiday finds his deceased partner, Marley (Ryan Arlon Palmer draped in chains), warning him that he will be visited by three spirits. And these ghosts - well conceived Christ-

mas Past, Christmas Present and Christmas Yet To Come - enlighten the audience even as they force Scrooge to face a reality he has for years denied.

Hearts may be lifted, thanks to the contrast within the Cratchit family, but not before the threat of a lonely death.

It's not all kid's stuff. This adaptation works only with split-second timing by the ensemble, which must scurry up and down ramps and into cubbyholes when changing scenes or - and one best appreciated by more mature theatergoers.

THEATER INFORMATION

PLAY: "A Christmas Carol," adapted from Charles Dickens' classic novella by Christopher J. Markle.

DIRECTOR: Kara Wooten.

WHEN: 8 p.m. today-Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday.

WHERE: Texas Tech University Theatre.

TICKETS: Reserved-seat tickets for the general public are priced at \$10 today and Saturday, and \$8 on Sunday. Reserved-seat tickets for all performances are priced at \$5 for children age 11 and younger and senior citizens age 55 and older and \$4 for Tech students. Call 742-3603 for reservations.

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LLANO ESTACADO
Festival of Lights
An Evening of Faith & "Las Posadas" - December 11
This "Santa Fe-style" evening comes complete with hundreds of luminaries on the downtown square, procession of candlelight, and a "Las Posadas" event that concludes with a live Nativity Scene featuring live actors, animals and music. "Las Posadas" begins at 6:30, activities continue until 8:30. "Sights n Lights" bus tours offer a comfortable way to view city lights.
An Evening for Children - December 18
Elementary choirs singing, rides with Santa on a REAL fire truck with goodies for all the children, strolling Dickens carolers, activities for kids and shopping. Open houses and extended shopping hours continue until 8:30. "Sights n Lights" bus tours offer a comfortable way to view city lights.
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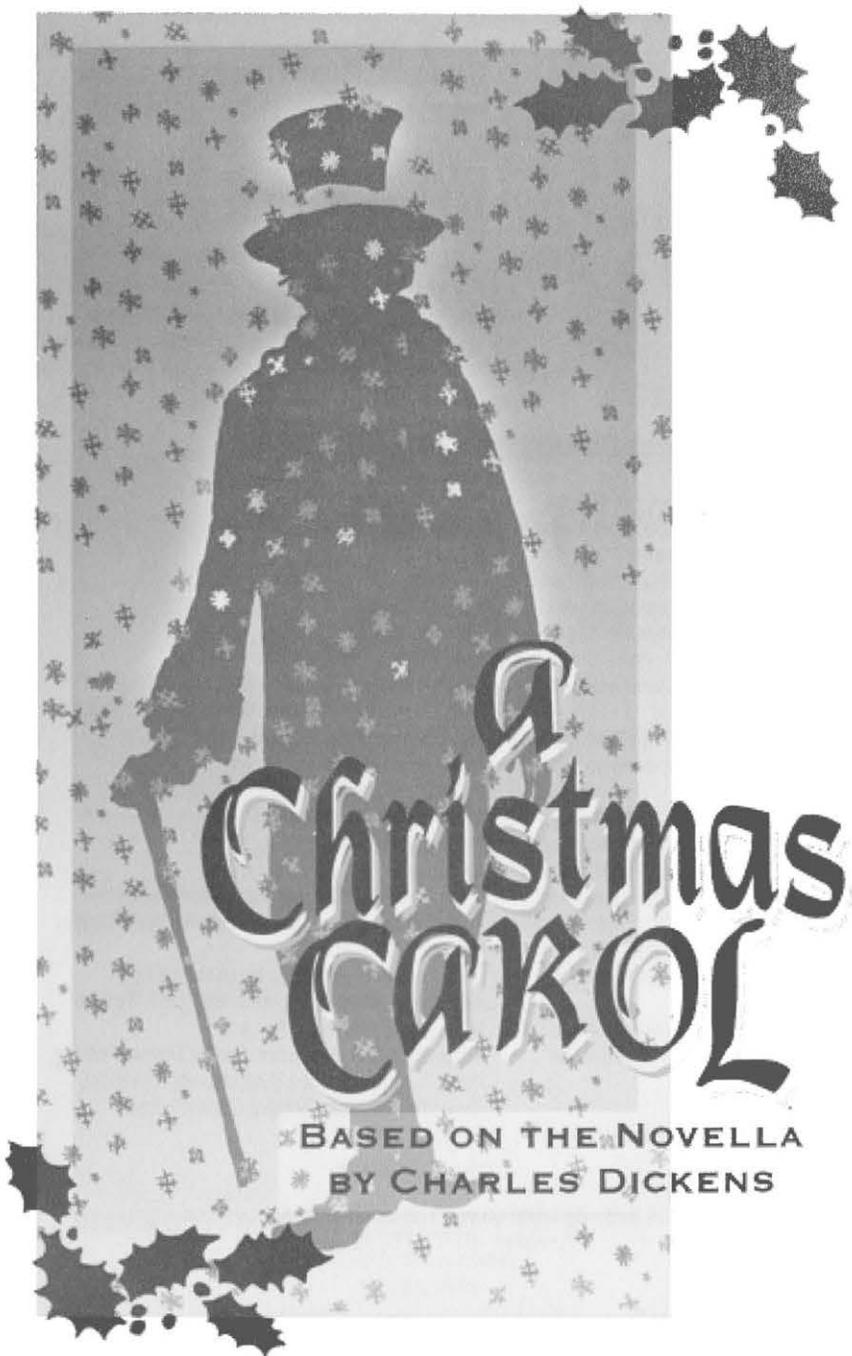
MAINSTAGE

1997-1998
THEATRE
SEASON

Christmas CAROL

BASED ON THE NOVELLA
BY CHARLES DICKENS





A Christmas CAROL

BASED ON THE NOVELLA
BY CHARLES DICKENS

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE

FACULTY

Dr. Norman A. Bert, Chair
 Prof. Seth Baumrin
 Prof. Frederik B. Christoffel
 Dr. Linda Donahue
 Prof. Christopher Markle
 Dr. Jonathan Marks
 Prof. Diana Moore
 Prof. Joan St. Germain
 Dr. Dean Wilcox
 Prof. Peggy Willis-Aarnio

**GRADUATE PART-TIME INSTRUCTORS
 AND TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

Jim Bush*/**	Louise Mallory
Kathryn Coleman	Deborah Martin
Velicia Daniels	Trey Mikolasky
Lisa Doty	Shu-Lan Miranda Ni
Wade Fransen	Laura Proffitt*
Patrick Gendusa	Todd Proffitt**
Brian Haimbach	Patrick White
Geoffrey Howard	Elizabeth Wintour
James W. Lee*	Kara Wooten*
Tobyn Leigh*	

UNIVERSITY THEATRE PRODUCTION STAFF

Director of Theatre	Frederik B. Christoffel
Director of Front-of-House Operations	Linda Donahue
Business Manager	Rick Tuman
Department Secretary	Mary Cervantes
Technical Director	Joe Pew
Properties Master	Rhinehart Pierce
Paint Charge	Vanessa Beck
Scene Shop Staff	Geoffrey Howard, Christi Vadovic, Sam Hyland*/**, Russell Hyland*/**, Ryan Palmer, Patrick White**
Costume Shop First Hand	Ruth Barrington
Costume Shop Staff	Lalon Alexander, Kathryn Coleman, Selandra Simpson, Shu-Lan Miranda Ni
Master Electrician	Todd Proffitt**
Lab Theatre Producer	Deborah Martin
Promotion Director	Tobyn Leigh*
Promotion Team	Velicia Daniels, Whitney Frazier, Patrick Gendusa, Trey Mikolasky, Shu-Lan Miranda Ni, Beth Wintour
Box Office Manager	Laura Proffitt*
Box Office Staff	Al Castro, Heidi Hargrove, Brian Haimbach, Christine Johnston, Trey Mikolasky, Beth Wintour
House Supervisor	Wade Fransen
House Staff	Shelly Blacklock, Catherine Crosby, Denise Fleming, Heidi Hargrove, Russell Hyland, Seth Marstrand, Tayva Pew, Michael Tuman, Christi Vadovic
Publications Director	James W. Lee*

*member - Alpha Psi Omega, national honorary theatre fraternity

**member - USITT, TTU Student Chapter

*The University Theatre of the Texas Tech Department of Theatre and Dance is a member of
 The Association for Theatre in Higher Education, the Lubbock Arts Alliance,
 the Southwest Theatre Association, the Texas Educational Theatre Association,
 Texas Nonprofit Theatres, Inc., and the American College Dance Festival Association.*

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY THEATRE
PRESENTS

A Christmas CAROL

BASED ON THE NOVELLA BY
CHARLES DICKENS

ADAPTATION AND PERFORMANCE TEXT BY CHRISTOPHER J. MARKLE

CAST

(ALPHABETICAL BY PERFORMER)

E. Ryan Barbe	Bob Cratchit, etc.
Shelly Blacklock	Fan, Rose, etc.
Monica De Los Santos	Mrs. Fezziwig, Martha, etc.
Todd Goodlett	Young Scrooge, Fred's Friend, etc.
Brian Haimbach	Ebenezer Scrooge
Whitney Manning	Belinda Cratchit
Joyce Meadows	Mrs. Fred, Miss Fezziwig, etc.
Michelle Mellgren	Mrs. Cratchit, Charwoman, etc.
Kevin Merkling	Dick Wilkins, Peter, etc.
Trey Mikolasky	Mr. Fezziwig, 2 nd Portly Gentleman, etc.
Julie Mitchell	Belle, Plump Sister, etc.
Ryan Arlon Palmer	Marley's Ghost, Topper, etc.
Omar Sadigh	1 st Portly Gentleman, Ghost of Christmas Present, Old Joe, etc.
Mike Scott	Schoolboy Scrooge, Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, etc.
Aaron Smith	Tiny Tim
Patrick Wakefield	Fred, Ghost of Christmas Past, etc.

TIME AND PLACE:

DECEMBER 24TH AND 25TH, 1843, LONDON

DIRECTOR

KARA WOOTEN

SCENIC DESIGNER

FREDERIK B. CHRISTOFFEL

COSTUME DESIGNER

JOAN ST. GERMAIN

LIGHTING DESIGNER

TAYVA PEW

There will be one 15-minute intermission

The taking of photographs, with or without flash, and the use of video or audio recording equipment is a violation of copyright law and is strictly prohibited.

PRODUCTION STAFF AND RUNNING CREW

Stage Manager & Assistant to the Director	Samuel Hyland
Assistant Costume Designer	Beth Blemker
Assistant Stage Manager	Christina Johnston
Scenic and Lighting Running Crew	Letecia Bryan, Chuck Clay, Evin Eubanks, Rachel Greene, Christina Hernandez, Danielle Peacock, Shawn Rizzo, J.P. Shanks
Costume Crew	Sonnet Cato, Ryan Ingram, Alison Menefee, Scott Tipton, Leslie Walton
House Managers	Catherine Crosby, Seth Marstrand
Ushers	Heidi Hargrove, Michael Tuman

Special Thanks to:

Dr. Jonathan Marks
Dr. Dean Wilcox
Chris Markle
Ryan Ingram

Mr. & Mrs. Manning
Mrs. Smith
Stephanie Hyland
Sherry L. Lyon

Sophia Varcados

Staff of Business Administration

Food or drink are not allowed in the theatre or the lobby. Smoking is prohibited anywhere in the building.
Late-comers will be seated by the ushers at the first appropriate interval during the play.
For the enjoyment of all patrons, if you have a paging device, please turn it off or leave it,
along with your seat number, with the House Manager, who will locate you with your message.
Please turn off wristwatch alarms and cellular telephones.

*Products appearing to be tobacco, alcohol, or any legal or illegal controlled substance which may be portrayed from time to time in Texas Tech University Theatre performances are special mixtures or preparations made to appear realistic for theatrical purposes.
Neither the Department of Theatre and Dance nor Texas Tech University condones or promotes the use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.*

NOTES ON THE ADAPTATION OF *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* FOR THE STAGE

by Christopher J. Markle

Each time I come back to Dickens's masterpiece, I am awestruck by its potency. It never ceases to delight me, to challenge me, and to inspire me.

This is a piece about the possibility of redemption. Not believing in reincarnation, Western man has always hoped that he could be reborn in this lifetime. We have longed to assure ourselves that change is always possible; that we are improvable; that we can progress. The story of Scrooge, the terrible and frightful miser, tells us that the worst of us can be reformed if we will only stop and look at the world around us and make the collective health and well-being our business.

NOTES ON THE ADAPTATION OF *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* FOR THE STAGE

Our goal in staging this piece was to stretch our theatrical imaginations to capture its incredible size and dynamism. We wanted to bring to the stage the *fullness* of Dickens's work: the many memorable people, the beauty and eloquence of his language, the detail of the descriptions, the muscularity of his argument, and the sting of his moral outrage.

Historians note that Dickens began this novella as an attack on the Ragged Schools - conducted for the benefit of the slum children of London by earnest young workers.

Dickens visited one of these places, and found it "an awful sight... the school is miserably poor... and is almost entirely supported by the teachers themselves... there is no such thing as dress among the seventy pupils... [the teachers'] moral courage is beyond all praise. They are surrounded by every possible adversity... Their office is worthy of the apostles."

He originally offered to write a description of these schools for the *Edinburgh Review*, but *A Christmas Carol* emerged from his pen instead. It was an immediate success, and luckily so, as Dickens himself was in urgent need of a winning commercial venture.

When measured against the whole of his canon, *A Christmas Carol* is relatively slim as far as numbers of pages are concerned. But, like all of Dickens, it is packed with detailed observations delightfully expressed, numerous and distinctive characters, and a finely-tuned sense of social conscience.

How do we put this on the stage? After all, when we sit in our armchairs and read it our imaginations can travel at the speed of Dickens's own thought. Years can peel away in an instant and images form and transform with dazzling immediacy.

Dickens himself began the tradition of bringing *A Christmas Carol* to life on the stage by giving readings of his work aloud. He was, by all accounts, a masterful reader. Actors such as Patrick Stewart (of *StarTrek* fame) still carry on this tradition to this day.

And so we come to our own version, that which you will see and hear tonight. We have not chosen to dramatize it in the usual sense. You will both hear a "story" and see a "play". Sometimes what you *hear* will not correspond *exactly* with what you *see*. Like children playing at make-believe, you will be invited to transform things and people quickly. When needed, objects might be called on to represent people, and people might be asked to take on the function of objects. With one word we can be in one location and with another word we can transform that location into a new one.

All the words are Dickens's own; they have not been made over into dialogue in the conventional sense of adaptation. Much of the narrative remains intact, with all its "if"s, "he said"s and "she said"s.

So we ask that *you* listen hard, and allow your imagination to intertwine with ours; to suspend your disbelief;... and most importantly, to believe, as Scrooge comes to believe, that we are all "fellow-travelers to the grave"; that "the common welfare" is our business; and that *if* we live our lives well, God *will* indeed bless us - "every one"!

WHO'S WHO IN A CHRISTMAS CAROL

E. Ryan Barbe (Bob Cratchit, etc.) is a senior BFA theatre arts major. He has been seen on the Tech Mainstage in *The Kentucky Cycle* and *The Imaginary Invalid*. He has also been in the Lab Theatre productions of *Red Noses*, *Lone Star*, and *Domino Courts*. He was last seen in *She Stands on Her Head*, performed for the American College Theatre Festival.

Shelly Blacklock (Fan, Rose, etc.) is a sophomore who plans to attain a BFA in acting/directing. This is her first appearance in a Texas Tech Production. Her last performance was as Anna in the University of Oklahoma's production of *Burn This*.

Frederik B. Christoffel (Scene Designer) holds an MFA in design from the University of Illinois. He has designed scenery and lights for over 85 productions in professional, regional, educational, and community theatres. He has also designed for television, locally for the *Fox Kid's Club* on Channel 34. He has designed scenery for the New York productions of *Biloxi Blues* and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. Mr Christoffel has worked in the development of the Angel Fire Theatre and serves as its producer. He is currently Director of Theatre and Head of Design at TTUT.

Monica De Los Santos (Mrs. Fezziwig, Martha, etc.) is pursuing a BA in dance and a BFA in theatre. She has played Diana Morales in *A Chorus Line* and a daughter in *The Pirates of Penzance*. She is a National Tap Dancing Champion. Monica's native home is Corpus Christi.

Todd Goodlett (Young Scrooge, Fred's friend, etc.) is a senior theatre major. He is a native Texan.

Brian Haimbach (Ebenezer Scrooge) is a first-year Ph.D. student from Greenville, South Carolina. He received his master's degree from the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. He received his BA from Florida State. He is listed on the South Carolina Roster of Artists for his adaptation of

Hamlet. He has worked professionally in Los Angeles, North Carolina, Alaska, North Dakota, Florida, and many other states.

Samuel Hyland (Stage Manager) is a senior BFA theatre major. He was most recently seen in *Red Noses* and *The Kentucky Cycle*. His stage management experience includes *A Christmas Carol*; *Six Women with Brain Death* . . . ; *Oleanna*; *Goodbye, See You Later*; and *Baby with the Bath Water*.

Christina Johnston (Assistant Stage Manager) is a freshman from Chicago. Her major is physics, but theatre is her lifeline and minor. She has experience onstage and backstage in many different places spanning several years. She was recently in *Guys and Dolls* on the Mainstage. She also stage managed *She Stands on Her Head* for the American College Theatre Festival.

Whitney Manning (Belinda Cratchit) is a seventh-grader at Irons Jr. High. She has appeared in *Annie Warbucks* at Texas Tech, *Wait Until Dark*, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, *The Arkansaw Bear*, and *Once Upon a Santa Claus* at Lubbock Community Theatre. Whitney loves playing softball and being with her friends.

Joyce Meadows (Mrs. Fred, Miss Fezziwig, etc.) is a senior English major from New Braunfels. She has appeared as Deborah in *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*, Trina Stanley in *Forty Carats*, and a doll in the ballet *Coppelia*.

Michelle Mellgren (Mrs. Cratchit, Charwoman, etc.) is a senior BFA acting/directing major. *A Christmas Carol* is her final production on the Tech stage. Her one-act play *Fate with a Capital F* will be produced in the spring. She is then off to Los Angeles to pursue a professional acting career.

WHO'S WHO IN A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Kevin Merkling (Dick Wilkins, Peter, etc.) is a freshman architecture/civil engineering major who has an insane love of the theatre. This is his first production at Texas Tech. Kevin has appeared in his hometown's productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Medea*.

Trey Mikolasky (Mr. Fezziwig, 2nd Portly Gentleman, etc.) is a first-year MFA graduate Teaching Assistant in acting/directing. He has been involved with the theatre for the last eleven years. He hopes to be a professor after graduation.

Julie Mitchell (Belle, Plump Sister, etc.) is a junior B.A. English and theatre major from Corsicana, Texas. She has been seen in the Tech performances of *An Evening of Improv*, *Sophocles' Antigone*, *Red Noses*, and *Agnes of God*. She was also in the Garza Theatre production of *Come Blow Your Horn*.

Ryan Arlon Palmer (Marley's Ghost, Topper, etc.) is a junior theatre major in the BFA program. This is Ryan's second performance in *A Christmas Carol*. Last year he was the Ghost of Christmas Present. Ryan was last seen as Harry the Horse in *Guys and Dolls*.

Tayva Pew (Lighting Designer) is a senior working towards her BFA in theatre design. She has worked backstage as stage manager, props master, and lighting designer. She has designed lighting for *Red Noses* and *Charlie Goodnight's Last Goodnight*. She also designed lights for the entire 1996 Lubbock Summer Rep.

Joan St. Germain (Costume Designer) marks her fifth year as the resident costume designer for the University Theatre. She has designed costumes for regional theatres in New England and New York and has taught costume design at Cameron University in Oklahoma. Some of her favorite designs include *Amadeus*, *The Barber of Seville*, and *A Man for All Seasons*.

Omar Sadigh (1st Portly Gentleman, Ghost of Christmas Present, Old Joe, etc.) is a BFA Theatre Arts major from Lubbock. He was seen earlier this semester in *Guys and Dolls*.

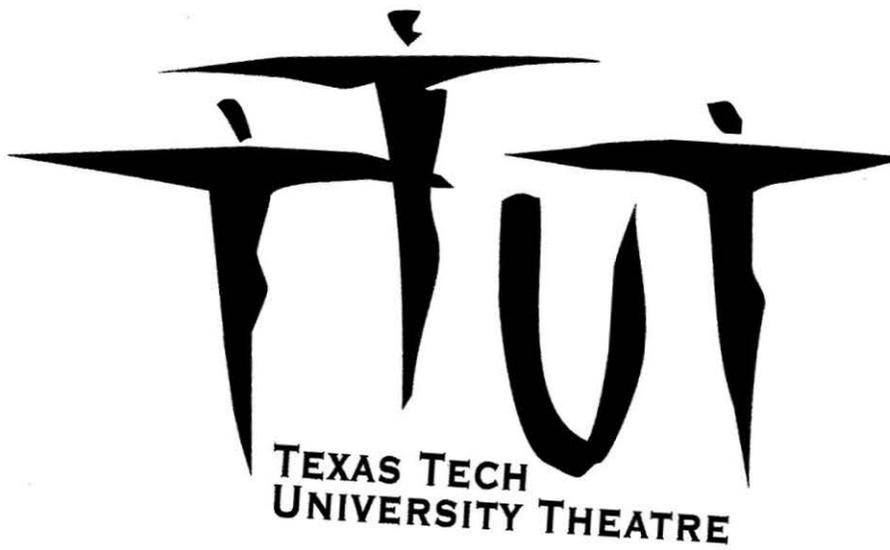
Mike Scott (Schoolboy Scrooge, Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, etc.) is a junior business major from Aledo, Texas. He plans to pursue a film career after graduation. Mike was last seen on the Tech Mainstage in *Guys and Dolls*. For the last two years Mike was a scholarship athlete in both track and cross country at Tech.

Aaron Smith (Tiny Tim) is a nine-year-old third-grader at Maedgen Elementary. Aaron played Mowgli in Maedgen's production of *The Jungle Book* when he was in the first grade. He performed in *United We Sing* at Meadgen in mid-November. Aaron also enjoys football, basketball, and *Odyssey of the Mind*.

Patrick Wakefield (Fred, Ghost of Christmas Past, etc.) is a sophomore at Tech and is majoring in Pre-Medical Technology. He was seen this semester in *Guys and Dolls*.

Kara Wooten (Director) is a Ph.D. student in Fine Arts specializing in acting/directing and theatre history/criticism. She has directed *The Rocky Horror Show*, *The Garden Party*, and *Impromptu*, is a certified actor/combatant in stage combat, and has appeared in *Fire in the Hole* from *The Kentucky Cycle*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and *Red Noses*. Kara dedicates this show to the cast and crew of *A Christmas Carol* for their hard work and perseverance. Special thanks to Phoebe.





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MAINSTAGE SEASON

October 16-26

GUYS AND DOLLS

Based on a story and characters of
Damon Runyan.

Book by Jo Swerling
and Abe Burrows.

Music and Lyrics by Frank Loesser.
Directed by Seth Baumrin

November 28 - December 7

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Based on the Novella
By Charles Dickens
Directed by Kara Wooten

February 26 - March 8

VINEGAR TOM

By Caryl Churchill
Directed by Dean Wilcox

April 16 - 26

TWELFTH NIGHT

By William Shakespeare
Directed by Jonathan Marks

LABORATORY SEASON

September 29 - October 5

AGNES OF GOD

By John Pielmeier
Directed by C. Patrick Gendusa

November 3 - 9

TWO ROOMS

By Lee Blessing
Directed by Jay Herndon

March 30 - April 5

RAIDER RED'S ONE-ACT PLAY SPECTACULAR

Original Scripts by Local Authors

April 27 - May 3

PATIENT A

By Lee Blessing
Directed by Robert Wernsman



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY THEATRE
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