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PENNSYLVANIA

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Photo Flash: First Look at EBENEZER SCROOGE'S BIG PLAYHOUSE CHRISTMAS SHOW at Bucks County Playhouse

One of the most beloved Christmas stories ever written takes on a decidedly New Hope twist when Buck County Playhouse premieres the new comedy, "Ebenezer Scrooge's Big Playhouse Christmas Show," throughout the rest of the month of December, with a matinee performance on New Year's Eve.

Producers Robyn Goodman, Alexander Fraser, Stephen Kocis, and Josh Fiedler are pleased to produce this new show which is written by the Broadway team of Gordon Greenberg ("Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn") and Steve Rosen ("The Other Josh Cohen"). It is directed by Josh Rhodes (Broadway's "Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella").

Five actors, three ladders, lots of music, laughter and one of the most beloved holiday stories ever told come together for a new Christmas show that is perfect for the entire family. Terrorizing the good citizens of Bucks County, Ebenezer Scrooge rediscovers the spirit of Christmas in this riotous Dickens mashup set in New Hope. All the traditional elements of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" are intact - including the iconic ghosts of Christmases Past, Present and Future - comically reimagined in this holiday frolic. The authors have rebooted the story - charging five talented actors with the task of playing nearly three dozen roles while infusing the show with a lot of comedy and harnessing the energetic joy of the season.

The cast stars Broadway veteran Don Stephenson as Ebenezer Scrooge. Don has appeared on Broadway in "The Producers," "A Gentleman's Guide To Love and Murder," "Parade," "Dracula," "By Jeeves," "Titanic," "Private Lives," "Rock of Ages," "Wonderful Town," "Pardon My English," and "The Bandwagon" (Encores!). He is joined by Evan Alexander Smith (Broadway's "Amazing Grace"), Kate Wetherhead (Broadway's "Legally Blonde" and BCP's "Company"), James Ludwig (Broadway's "Monty Python's Spamalot" - Original Cast) and Tracey Conyer Lee ("BEDBUGS!!! IT'S A MUSICAL" Off-Broadway).

Michael Carnahan is scenic designer. Brian C. Hemesath is costume designer. Cory Pattak is lighting designer and Matthew Given is sound designer. Casting is by Tara Rubin Casting. Christopher Flores is stage manager.

In coordination with the production and as part of the Playhouse's education program, Bucks County Playhouse is offering the opportunity for local theater-lovers and aspiring thespians to join a cast on the historic Playhouse stage as "Scene-Stealers." Designed as an educational opportunity, the "Scene-Stealers" will be employed as "The Sons of Pitches" caroling group in "Ebenezer Scrooge's Big Playhouse Christmas Show!" Following curtain call, "Scene-Stealers" will lead audience members into the Courtyard to sing Christmas Carols.

"When we discussed the possibility of creating something new for the Playhouse's holiday show, we immediately reached out to Gordon Greenberg, who directed our holiday productions of "It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play" (2012) and "Plaid Tidings" as well as Steve Rosen, most recently our Nathan Detroit in "Guys and Dolls" and one of the funniest people we know," says Robyn Goodman, Executive Producer. "Together they have created a high-energy, outrageously entertaining take on a story that is so familiar but has never been experienced this way before."

"The production fits nicely with our work in the community. The New Hope Chamber has been decking the halls of this historic town to make it feel even more Dickensian this holiday season," says Fraser. "We are very excited to welcome Broadway star Don Stephenson and cast to New Hope to show them the charm of a Bucks County Christmas."

Not only does "Ebenezer Scrooge's Big Playhouse Christmas Show" close out a very busy year at the Playhouse, which saw ticket sales increase by more than 30%, but it marks the fourth world premiere presented at the Playhouse in 2017. The summer season launched in May with the debut of "Clue: On Stage." This fall, the Playhouse hosted a world-premiere musical, "Rock and Roll Man: The Alan Freed Story" and the new musical comedy, "The New World" will complete its run on December 2.

Tickets to "Ebenezer Scrooge's Big Playhouse Christmas Show" range from \$40 - \$75. Special rates for groups of 10 or more. For complete details, and to purchase tickets, please visit buckscountyplayhouse.org, call [215-862-2121](tel:215-862-2121), or visit the box office at 70 South Main Street, New Hope, PA.

Bucks County Playhouse, a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, is the oldest and largest professional Equity performing arts center in Bucks County. Under the direction of Tony Award-winning producers Alexander Fraser and Robyn Goodman, the Playhouse provides first class professional theatrical entertainment as well as community events, partnerships and arts education programming for visitors and residents of New Hope, Doylestown, Lambertville and the Delaware Valley.

Located between Philadelphia and New York, Bucks County Playhouse opened in 1939 in a converted 1790 gristmill after a group of community activists, led by Broadway orchestrator Don Walker and playwright Moss Hart, rallied to save the building. The Playhouse quickly became one of the country's most famous regional theaters, featuring a roster of American theatrical royalty including Helen Hayes, Kitty Carlisle, George S. Kaufman, Grace Kelly, Robert Redford, Bert Lahr, Walter Matthau, Angela Lansbury, Bernadette Peters, Alan Alda, Tyne Daly, Liza Minnelli and Audra McDonald and remained in continuous operation until December 2010. In 2012, the Playhouse re-opened thanks to the efforts of the Bridge Street Foundation, the nonprofit family foundation of Kevin and Sherri Daugherty, and Broadway producer Jed Bernstein.

Since its renovation, significant productions include Terrence McNally's "Mothers and Sons" starring Tyne Daly, which moved to Broadway and was nominated for two Tony Awards, and "Misery" by William Goldman based on the Stephen King novel which also went on to a Broadway run in the 2015-16 season. Two of the Playhouse's recent productions -- "Company" starring Justin Guarini, and William Finn's "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" -- were named by Wall Street Journal to its "Best of Theatre" list for 2015. The Playhouse's productions of "Steel Magnolias" and "Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story" broke box office records in 2016. Thanks to the Bridge Street Foundation and its vision for the New Hope waterfront, the Playhouse is currently in construction as it adds a 4,000-square foot riverfront cafe and bar that will open in 2018.

Photo Credit: Joan Marcus



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