

ALLEY THEATRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Rachel Applegate, Director of Marketing and Communications, rachela@alleytheatre.org,
281.772.1928

Larisa Gawlik, Public Relations and Communications Manager, larisag@alleytheatre.org,

512.560.9342

Alley Theatre Gives Houstonians the Gift of a Free Online Production of *A Christmas Carol* This Holiday Season

HOUSTON, TX – Out of an abundance of caution, the Alley Theatre has decided to cancel the in-person production of *A Christmas Carol*, which was originally scheduled to run November 20 – December 27, 2020. The cancellation is due to health and safety concerns in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Alley Theatre values the health and safety of its staff, artists, and patrons and believes that this cancellation is necessary to protect everyone from COVID-19.

Instead, the Alley will provide a free gift to the city of Houston by producing a digital production of *A Christmas Carol* with the generous support of Presenting Sponsor **ConocoPhillips**.

“All of us at the Alley are longing to gather with you again in the theatre, especially during the holidays when togetherness and the family tradition of hearing Dickens’ story of *A Christmas Carol* is such an important part of how we celebrate,” said Artistic Director **Rob Melrose**. “At the same time, I’m very excited about the innovative way we’ve figured out to bring this heartwarming story of hope and redemption to each and every Houstonian free of charge this holiday season. Consider it a gift from the Alley and ConocoPhillips to all of Houston. This year will be the most unique and intimate production of *A Christmas Carol* that we have ever done. Filmed in the safety of our Resident Acting Company’s homes, our team is making this story come to life despite our current obstacles. Please celebrate the holidays with us online, share this with friends who don’t know the story, and bring a sense of our usual celebrations during these unusual times.”

“ConocoPhillips is a proud supporter of Houston’s thriving arts and culture community. We are delighted to be the Presenting Sponsor of Alley Theatre’s *A Christmas Carol*,” said **Ryan M. Lance**, ConocoPhillips Chairman and CEO. “This year is particularly special since it marks our 25th year of supporting this production. We hope everyone will take the time this holiday season to reconnect with family and friends and reflect on what’s important in life—happiness, kindness, and love.”

The digital production of Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* is adapted by **Doris Baizley** and directed by Alley’s **Associate Producer & Casting Director Brandon Weinbrenner**. The Alley’s Resident Acting Company and additional Houston-area actors will star in the digital production. Each actor will be filmed in their respective homes. *A Christmas Carol* will be available to view online from **December 4 to December 27, 2020**.

To view the digital production of *A Christmas Carol*, patrons simply need to register on the Alley Theatre’s website at **alleytheatre.org**. Registration opens **October 28, 2020**.

The cast includes **Elizabeth Bunch** as Ghost of Christmas Past/Mrs. Cratchit, **Dylan Godwin** as Ghost of Christmas Present/Clown, **Shawn Hamilton** as Mr. Fezziwig/Jake the Fence, **Chris Hutchison** as Bob Cratchit, **Mack Hutchison** as Tiny Tim/Prop Boy, **Melissa Pritchett** as Charitable Woman/Mrs. Fezziwig/Mother-in-Law, **David Rainey** as Scrooge/Stage Manager, **Jay Sullivan** as Fred, **Raven Justine Troup** as Belle/Mrs. Fred, and **Todd Waite** as Marley/Director.

The creative team for *A Christmas Carol* includes Scenic Design by **Michael Locher**, Lighting Design by **Kevin Rigdon**, Costume Design by **Erica Griese**, Music and Sound Design by **Pierre Dupree**, and Video Design by **Carrithers Studio**.

The Alley Theatre will be providing closed captioning in Spanish and Vietnamese for *A Christmas Carol*.

The Alley Theatre will host its annual **Deck the Trees** event at the **George R. Brown Convention Center** provided courtesy of **Houston First Corporation**, as an alternate viewing location this season. The spectacularly decorated trees will be on display in the central windows of the George R. Brown Convention Center, allowing for outside, social distancing measures to be in place so Houstonians can continue to enjoy this joyful holiday tradition. The trees will be on display from **November 20, 2020** through **January 3, 2021**. This year, **Taylor DeMartino** from **DeMartino Design Group** and **HTX Floral CO.** will design the stunning Signature Tree that will captivate Houstonians with its gorgeous *Frozen*-inspired decorations.

The Alley will host a private lighting ceremony at George R. Brown Convention Center on November 20, 2020. **Mayor Sylvester Turner** will flip the official switch to light the Christmas trees and mark the start of the holiday season.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges, and event organizers have been forced to be creative and re-imagine their productions this year,” said Mayor Sylvester Turner. “I am grateful that the Alley Theatre is keeping the *A Christmas Carol* tradition alive. The city of Houston and the Alley Theatre are resilient. And I cannot imagine a more resilient pivot since we cannot gather in person for live theatrical events.”

While the holidays will look different this season, the Alley is committed to bringing Houston’s favorite holiday traditions to life in new and inventive ways in hopes that more Houstonians have access to witness the magic of twinkling Christmas trees and the transformation of Scrooge.

ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE:

The Alley Theatre, one of America’s leading nonprofit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Artistic Director Rob Melrose and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. The Alley is committed to developing and producing theatre that is as diverse as the Houston community. The Theatre produces up to 16 plays and nearly 500 performances each season, ranging from the best current work and re-invigorated classic plays to new plays by contemporary writers. Home to a full-time resident company of actors, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline—actors, directors, designers, composers, playwrights—who work on individual productions throughout each season as visiting artists.

The Alley is comprised of two state-of-the-art theatres: the 774-seat Hubbard Theatre and the 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre. The Alley reaches over 200,000 people each year through its performance, education, and community engagement programs. Its audience enrichment programs include pre-show and post-performance talks, events, and workshops for audience members of all ages.

###