

# ALLEY THEATRE

## James Black Returns to the Alley Stage in A CHRISTMAS CAROL, November 16 – December 30, 2018

*Interim Artistic Director James Black steps back into the role of Ebenezer Scrooge for this year's holiday classic production, joining the entire Alley Resident Acting Company on stage*

HOUSTON – Alley Theatre's Interim Artistic Director, Resident Company Actor, and Alley Associate Director James Black returns to the stage for the holiday production, **A Christmas Carol- A Ghost Story of Christmas**. Black reprises his role as Ebenezer Scrooge, marking his 16<sup>th</sup> Alley production of *A Christmas Carol* and 13<sup>th</sup> production in the role of Scrooge. He joins the entire resident acting company and more than 40 local cast members for an imaginative re-telling of Charles Dickens' classic story, which follows Ebenezer Scrooge's journey with the three ghostly apparitions who visit him on Christmas Eve. Performances of *A Christmas Carol* are scheduled to begin Friday, November 16 and will run through Sunday, December 30. Tickets are available now at the Alley Theatre Box Office at 713.220.5700 and online at [www.alleytheatre.org](http://www.alleytheatre.org).

"Charles Dicken's *A Christmas Carol* at the Alley Theatre has been a primary part of the holiday season for nearly half of my life. Whether as a director or an actor, rehearsing or performing, it's as much a tradition for my household as putting up a tree or hanging a stocking. And returning to the role of Scrooge, a part I first played almost a quarter of a century ago, is the best Christmas present a boy could hope for," said Black

Last year, the Alley's *A Christmas Carol* celebrated the reopening of the Hubbard Theatre and this year, the 14<sup>th</sup> production of Michael Wilson's adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* celebrates Alley staff, actor and artist accomplishments, and new traditions for the Theatre. Family audiences (children ages 6 and older) can enjoy this colorful, comical, and music-filled production. Magical and heartwarming, this unforgettable theatrical production of *A Christmas Carol* instills a powerful message about redemption and the true spirit of the holiday season.

After 11 seasons, James Black returns as Ebenezer Scrooge. Black has performed in various Alley productions of *A Christmas Carol* since 1989 in the roles of the Ghost of Christmas Present, Mrs. Dilber and Ebenezer Scrooge. He also serves as director and has directed *A Christmas Carol* at the Alley more than 25 times.

For the first time, all members of the Alley's Resident Company will appear on stage in *A Christmas Carol*. The company includes Dylan Godwin as Mrs. Dilber/Jacob Marley, Shawn Hamilton as Mr. Marvel, Chris Hutchison as Bob Cratchit, Paul Hope as Second Solicitor/ Mr. Fezziwig, Charles Krohn as Undertaker/Old Joe, Melissa Pritchett as Mary Pidgeon/Spirit Of Christmas Past, David Rainey as Bert/Spirit Of Christmas Present, Jay Sullivan as Fred/Scrooge At 21, and Todd Waite as First Solicitor/Fiddler.

Additionally, Alley actor Julia Krohn will share the role of Mrs. Cratchit/Mrs. Fezziwig with Resident Company member Elizabeth Bunch.

Rounding out the cast are Adam Gibbs as Apparition/Dick Wilkins/Mr. Topper, Gabby Greer as Apparition/Martha Cratchit/Wendy, Mark Ivy as Apparition/Lamplighter/Travis, Chelsea Ryan McCurdy as Apparition/Beggar Woman/Fred's Sister-In-Law, Melissa Molano as Belle Fred's Wife, Jared Tettey as Apparition/Party Guest, and Teresa Zimmerman as Apparition/Rich Lady/Patricia. Luke Hamilton, David Matranga and Briana J. Resa serve as swing/understudies.

*A Christmas Carol* is adapted and originally directed by Michael Wilson. The production is directed by James Black and features scenic designs by Tony Award®-winner Tony Straiges (Alley's *The Heiress*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*) with costumes by Alejo Vietti (Alley's *Cleo*, *A View from the Bridge*). Lighting is designed by Rui Rita (Alley's *Holmes and Watson*, *The Old Friends*), and original music and sound design is composed by John Gromada (Alley's *The Elephant Man*, *Dividing the Estate*, *Ether Dome*). Choreography is by Hope Clarke. Melissa Pritchett serves as the Dance Captain with Stage Managers Rebecca R.D. Hamlin, and Kristen Larson.

In addition to the adult cast, more than 20 children from the Greater Houston community will be participating in various roles in this production. The youth cast includes Isabela Iris Abrego, Liam Alonzo, Flinn Burrell, Molly Burrell, André

Couturier, Sunny Jet Bryant, Tabitha Clay, Nathan Cooper, Carly Cooper, Sophia Eden, Hazel E. Egging, Trinity El-Hakam, Alina Garcia, Gabriela E. Gonzales, Emilia Marie Haymon, Isaac Hochglaube, Camille Hutchison, Ariel A. Molina, Ayden Molina, Kai Tregre, Jack Townsend, and Ava Von Kanel.

**SPONSORS:** *A Christmas Carol* is generously sponsored by ConocoPhillips and Vinson & Elkins. The Alley Theatre is supported by the 2018-19 Season sponsor United Airlines, the official airline of the Alley Theatre; Four Seasons Hotel Houston, the official hotel of the Alley Theatre; and Lynn Wyatt.

**TICKETS:** Tickets to *A Christmas Carol* are now on sale and start at \$26. Discounted tickets are available for military and senior, and any student, regardless of age, with a valid student ID for \$16 for designated performances in designated sections. Tickets can be ordered online ([alleytheatre.org](http://alleytheatre.org)) or by phone (713.220.5700).

VIP performances including pre-show and intermission reception with holiday treats and drinks and post-show cast meet and greet are available.

Performances of *A Christmas Carol* are Tuesday - Friday at 7:30 p.m., Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and Sunday at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. *A Christmas Carol* is recommended for general audiences, ages 6 and up. Select weekday matinees available.

**SPECIAL EVENT: DECK THE TREES November 16, 2018- January 2, 2019:** This annual tradition brings new and longstanding supporters together to celebrate the myriad of gifts that the Theatre infuses into the lives of young people and those young at heart. The Deck the Trees Celebration will transform the Alley Theatre lobby into a winter wonderland of trees, festively decorated by Houston's leading designers and sponsored by generous businesses and individuals. For more information please visit: <https://www.alleytheatre.org/support-us/special-events/deck-the-trees>

#### **PRESS MATERIALS:**

A Christmas Carol Photos: <https://www.alleytheatre.org/press/christmas-carol-photos>

Photos of James Black as Scrooge in Past Productions:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/y0b7q0b88o4rock/AAB0bd6ZR73jr5CcgWPZ9nv7a?dl=0>

**CONNECT WITH US:** #ChristmasCarolHOU @alleytheatre

#### **ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE**

The Alley Theatre, one of America's leading nonprofit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Interim Artistic Director James Black and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. The Alley produces up to 16 plays each year in its newly renovated Theatre, ranging from the best current work to re-invigorated classic plays, to new plays by contemporary writers. The Alley is home to a resident company of actors. In addition, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline – actors, designers, composers, playwrights – who work on individual productions throughout each season as visiting artists.

The renovation of the Alley's Hubbard Theatre was completed in October 2015 – and created a new 774-seat state-of-the-art performance venue. Matched with the newly renovated 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre, the Alley offers nearly 500 performances each season. The Company reaches over 200,000 people each year through its performance and education programs. Its audience enrichment programs include pre-show and post-performance talks, events, and workshops for audience members of all ages.

###