

## A Christmas Carol: A play to warm your heart

*Brampton Guardian*

BRAMPTON— There's a reason why, year after year, people flock to see retelling of A Christmas Carol on stage.

The classic story of Christmas, though written by Charles Dickens in 1843, explores many themes that are still relevant today.

Plus, there's been 170 years to perfect it, change it up, and add new and exciting twists.

This year's presentation by the Rose Theatre, running Dec. 20 to 22 at Lester B. Pearson theatre, brings a more traditional telling of the story.

Complete with a narration of the story and some beautiful Victorian carols, the play will warm hearts with its charming depiction.

Rob Woodcock, who sits in the holiday show director's seat for the first time, said he's thrilled to bring together a show and a cast that is familiar to local audiences.

This is the seventh year the Rose Theatre has staged a Christmas show, and Woodcock has performed in several of the past versions of A Christmas Carol.

This year, however, the biggest difference in this presentation is the addition of the narrator.

"Mark Llewellyn is cast as Charles Dickens narrating our way through the story," said Rob Woodcock, director. "He helps us paint a lovely picture, and the transformation Scrooge is going through really hits home."

Joining Llewellyn on stage is a cast of familiar favourites— Sweeney MacArthur as Scrooge, Erin MacKinnon as Mrs. Cratchit, Jon Alex MacFarlane as Bob Cratchit, Scott Carmichael as Fred (Scrooge's nephew), Jamie McRoberts as Christmas Past, Amanda Dwyer as Present, Shannon Coulter as Future and Fiona MacFarlane as Tiny Tim. Actors Danny Harvey, Matt Willis, Jaden Carmichael, Joseph O'Toole, and Aly MacFarlane round out the cast.

"I have seen many versions of Christmas Carol at the Rose, but this is the first time I have the privilege of being a part of it," said MacKinnon, who plays the wife of Bob Cratchit and the mother of Tiny Tim.

The story unfolds when we see the Cratchits struggle financially because of Ebenezer Scrooge and his miserly ways. As a result, the bitter old miser is visited by Jacob Marley and the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future.

"Scrooge's journey to find the real meaning of Christmas is something I think everyone can relate to in some way," said MacKinnon. "Watching Scrooge's transformation throughout the show is truly a heart-warming experience."

In addition to a poignant story, the live version includes beautiful music and choral singing, which bring depth to the mood and feeling of the show. And, it's one that appeals to all ages, and is often a child's first introduction to live theatre.

And one that Woodcock hopes will become a tradition for families year after year.

Live theatre is a way to personally connect with and become immersed in the story.

"It's a quick-paced script with plenty of music," said MacKinnon. "It's the quickest way to get into the Christmas spirit."

Tickets are \$39/adult and \$19/children 12 and under. The play runs Dec. 20 and 21 at 7:30 p.m. and Dec. 22 at 2 p.m.

For more, call 905-874-2800 or visit [www.rosetheatre.ca](http://www.rosetheatre.ca) (<http://www.rosetheatre.ca>).



*The Cratchits as portrayed in this year's production of A Christmas Carol, staged by the Rose Theatre.*

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