Charles Dickens’
A Christmas Carol

Perseverance Theatre
Alaskan Regional Theatre

Dec 18 - 27

Adapted by Arlitia Jones & Michael Haney
Directed by Michael Haney

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FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Welcome to A Christmas Carol, with Scrooge, Marley, Tiny Tim and all!

In living PT’s mission of creating theatre by and for Alaskans, the theatre finds an incredible opportunity—we are charged with working, whenever we can, with Alaskan artists, and giving them the chance to collaborate and interact with the writers, designers, actors, and artists that we bring in from outside. We’re simultaneously enriching our Alaskan community and the wider national theatre community through this interaction, this essential part of making live theatre.

You, as audience members are essential as well. By showing up and participating in this art form—just by experiencing it—you’re making it happen, and you keep it happening. Many of you have gone one step further: you’ve supported the theatre through your charitable donation. Thank you! We are in the midst of our annual individual giving campaign, and we’re a little more than halfway to our goal. If you aren’t yet a donor, you’ll find information on giving in the playbill, and donation envelopes in the lobby. Or, donate online at ptalaska.org/donate-now. Thank you!

If you’re one of the families that has joined us tonight through our new program to support Anchorage PTAs, thank you! Please let other families know about the opportunity to help your school and save on tickets at the same time. Perseverance is grateful to be part of the Anchorage education community. Stay tuned for news about our upcoming spring break camp.

We are full of cheer about making this, Perseverance’s own adaptation of Dicken’s classic, an annual holiday event. Local playwright Arlitia Jones and co-adapter Michael Evan Haney, plus the incredible artists, actors, and designers have added depth and layers to this tasty Christmas cake including more music, and more visual treats! Together as audiences and artists, for a few weeks this December here in the Discovery Theatre, we can see and hear what generations have seen and heard all over the world, since Charles Dickens imagined this story into being more than 150 years ago.

Happy Holidays!

Art Rotch
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Perseverance Theatre’s production of

A Christmas Carol

Adapted by
Arlitia Jones and Michael Evan Haney

Based on the Book by
Charles Dickens

Directed by
Michael Evan Haney†

Scenic Designer Art Rotch††
Lighting Designer Jim Sale††
Costume Designer Becky Laskey
Associate Costume Designer Kaie Promish
Composer/Sound Designer Lucy Peckham
Choreographer Kristen Vierthaler
Vocal Coach Kate Egan
Stage Manager BJ Brooks

Assistant Stage Manager Michael D. Ward
Props Master Kordel Thompson
Company Manager Kathleen Harper
Casting Shona Osterhout
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Technical Director Matt Smith
Master Carpenter Jon Kumpost
Sound Engineer Michael Sakarias
Master Electrician Lauren Miller

Costume Shop Manager Kaie Promish
Associate Director Tom Robenolt
Playbill Joshua Lowman
Production Stage Manager BJ Brooks

Production Support Anchorage Opera

Special Thanks: Alaska Theatre of Youth & Max Aronson, and Dan Carlgren

††United Scenic Artist Local USA 829 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees
*Members of Actors Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers

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December 18 - 27, 2015

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Jon Kumpost....................................................................................Welder/Carpenter
Carrie Yanagawa.................................................................Charge Painter
Elle Janecek ......................................................................................Wig and Hai
Christopher Metzger ..............................................................NYC Costume Support
Denice Jewell ............................................................................UAA Costume Support
Colleen Metzger ................................................................................UAA Costume Support
Debbie Fowler .....................................................................................Costume Shop Volunteer
Liisbeth Kala .....................................................................................Costume Shop Volunteer
Melody Murdock ................................................................................Costume Shop Volunteer
Care Burpe ......................................................................................Costume Shop Volunteer
Elena Nalchevska-Kaufman......................................................Costume Shop Volunteer

Run crew provided by I.A.T.S.E. local 918

PROFILES

Kevin T. Bennett (Scrooge) is an American screen and stage actor, director, filmmaker, producer, and business entrepreneur. Kevin is a member of SAG-AFTRA and has over 34 years of performance experience. His accolades include over 100 productions throughout stage and film, and his work has made him a very recognizable Alaskan resident artist. Notably, appearing as Ulysses in Perseverance Theatre's Annapurna earlier this season, and his recurring role as General Haiger, with Oscar winner Jon Voight in The Baby Geniuses sequels. Highly sought after as a production collaborator, with 9 years of service, Mr. Bennett is the past president of the board of directors at ACT. A successful businessman, Mr. Bennett is the founding owner of Alaska Stairlift & Elevator, LLC. Kevin is originally from Alaska and makes his home in Anchorage. In his recent film, Six Dead Bodies Duct Taped to a Merry-Go-Round, he directs and stars.
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PROFILES

Aaron Wiseman (Marley / Present) last performed at Perseverance Theatre in Harold Pinter’s Betrayal (Juneau and Anchorage). This coming spring, in Juneau, he will reprise the Cyrano’s production of Venus in Fur by David Ives, in association with and at Perseverance. Other notable past performances include Lovborg in Hedda Gabler (TossPot), Alfred Lunt in the West Coast premier of Jeffrey Hatcher’s Ten Chimneys (Cyrano’s), and Arlitia Jones’ Grand Central and 42nd (TBA), performing as a finalist in the Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Play Festival. He also referees NCAA volleyball and has documented U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue operations for The Weather Channel.

John Parsi (Solicitor Salt / Topper / Fezziwig Party Guest / Slackjaw / Pidge / Constable) is honored to reprise his roles in A Christmas Carol. He has appeared in performances with TBA’s OverNights, TossPot productions, as a director for Cyrano’s Anchorage Centennial show, and in the One-Minute Play Festival as a performer and director. He performs as a member of Scared Scriptless Improv and Urban Yeti Improv, where he also directs Urban Yeti After Dark. He has performed improv in New York City; Austin, Texas; Las Vegas, Nevada; and Juneau, Alaska.

Jill Sowerwine (Solicitor Peppin / Fezziwig Party Guest / Toesy) is a graduate of the UAA Theatre Department and is co-founder of TossPot Productions. She is very pleased to be a part of A Christmas Carol for a second year. Notable roles include: Mrs. Elvsted, Hedda Gabler (Cyrano’s); Jolianne, Come to Me, Leopards (Cyrano’s); Anastasia, A Gulag Mouse (TossPot Productions); Elena Verdent, Gravidity (Theatre on the Rocks); Betty Yearn, Landscape of the Body (UAA); Joy/Dottie, Well (Out North); Miss Casewell, The Mousetrap (ACT).

Ann Reddig (Mrs. Fezziwig / Peake / Lucy / Caroler) is happy to be returning to A Christmas Carol. She has spent several years doing everything else that can be done in theater. Ann is an artistic partner with her husband David Haynes of Once a Year Theater Co. Ann has been seen in Cabaret, Snow in Galveston, Nunsense, Urinetown and did improv with the Scene Machine and Open Saturday Improvisation at the Dead Ram.

David Haynes (Mr. Fezziwig / Old Joe / Streets) is happy to be reprising his roles from last year’s production and to be working with this stellar cast and Perseverance Theatre once more. David has worked with a plethora of performing arts groups in such classics as Cabaret, Angry Housewives, Return to the Forbidden Planet and Hedda Gabler, among others. He also starred in Noises Off, The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged), Sylvia, and Batboy-The Musical. David has been a frequent participant at the Last Frontier Theatre Conference, in The OverNights, and Fourplay. David is pleased to be sharing the stage again with his lovely wife, the emphatic Ann Reddig.

Danielle Rabinovitch (Past / Katherine / Mrs. Dilber) is thrilled to return to Perseverance Theatre, last seen as Emilia in Othello. Selected recent credits include: Arlitia Jones’ Come to Me, Leopards, (Cyrano’s Theatre Company); A Gulag Mouse (TossPot Productions); Catherine in Pippin, the Baker’s Wife in Into the Woods, Maureen in RENT (Theatre Artists United); Macbeth, South Pacific (Anchorage Opera); Van’s Sister in Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead (Out North Contemporary Art House); Lina Lamont in Singin’ in the Rain (UAA); Paper Bag Princess, and Audrey II in Little Shop of Horrors (UHM). Film/TV credits include: Witewold, Standards of Karen, Truth or Homecoming, Alaska Haunting, and ABC’s LOST.

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PROFILES

Alyssa Barnes (Belle / Wilamina / Caroler) Born and raised in Anchorage, Alyssa has been performing in many of the venues around the state since the age of 17. She attended the University of Anchorage Alaska where she acquired vocal and dance training, and received her bachelor’s degree in theatre in 2012. Her acting credits include such roles as Katherine from Shakespeare’s Taming of the Shrew, Constance Neville from Oliver Goldsmith’s She Stoops to Conquer, Deborah Soloman from David Mamet’s Sexual Perversity in Chicago, Janet from Richard O’Brien’s The Rocky Horror Picture Show, Alice Kinnian from David Rogers’ Flower for Algernon, and many more. This will be her second production with Perseverance Theatre and she couldn’t be more thrilled.

Alder Rye Fletcher (Dick Wilkins / Undertaker Glour / Bean / Poulterer) got his start with Pier One Theater on the Homer Spit, performing in productions of Much Ado About Nothing and The Importance of Being Earnest among others. In Anchorage, he has worked primarily with the University of Alaska, appearing in such shows as The Taming of the Shrew, M. Butterfly, and recently, Twelfth Night. This is his first production with Perseverance Theatre.

Erik Dahl (Young Scrooge / Future / Streets / Culpepper) is excited to reprise his role in A Christmas Carol. He was born and raised in Anchorage, leaving for college in Washington before deciding to return. He has been performing theater since middle school, and was involved in many full length productions during his high school and college years. Since coming back to Anchorage, he has primarily performed with Scared Scriptless and Urban Yeti Improv, but has returned to theatrical productions in recent years. He hopes to continue performing as long as his engineering career allows.

Jamie Nelson (Bob Cratchit) is honored to be reprising this role with such a talented ensemble. He lives with his resplendent wife, adorable son, and German shepherd in Soldotna. As such, he’s tremendously grateful to Anchorage friends who offer him their spare bedrooms. When off stage and not working on film or TV commercials, he is a personal financial coach. He has been seen in Macbeth (Ross), Hedda Gabler (George Tesman), The Odd Couple (Felix Ungar), Clybourne Park (Russ/Dan), Gravidity (George Verendt), It’s A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play (George Bailey), One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (Randle P. McMurphy), Arsenic and Old Lace (Mortimer Brewster), Bus Stop (Bo Decker), Sylvia (Greg), Ten Chimneys, 44 Plays For 44 Presidents, Insane With Power, Over the River and Through the Woods, Wait Until Dark, and Completely Hollywood: Abridged.

Kathryn Strock (Mrs. Cratchit / Streets / Fezziwig Party Guest) is thrilled to be making her debut performance with Perseverance Theatre. Originally from Greencastle, Pennsylvania she holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Shenandoah University. She has performed with numerous regional and summer stock companies across the United States and has appeared in national tours of Show Boat and My Fair Lady. Locally, she has performed with Cyrano’s Playhouse (It’s A Wonderful Life the Radio Show, Carnival, Gold Rush Girls) and Anchorage Opera (The Pirates of Penzance, Die Fledermaus, Carmen). She also can be seen performing with some of Anchorage’s top jazz/blues musicians. Katie is the music/drama specialist at Pacific Northern Academy. She is very proud to be an educator and performer!

James Sullivan (Fred / Fezziwig Party Guest) See page 23

Enrique Bravo (Ensemble) See page 23

Avery Jacobs (Martha Cratchit / Fezziwig Party Guest) is a homeschooled nineth grader who loves to sing and perform. She is excited to reprise her role as Martha and to work with this amazing cast and crew again! She has been active in local theatre, appearing in numerous shows with Alaska Theatre of Youth and Cyrano’s. Avery would like to dedicate her performance to her friends and family.
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PROFILES

Meridian Harrap (Fan / Belinda Cratchit / Fezziwig Party Guest) is excited to be a member of Perseverance Theatre’s *A Christmas Carol*. As an eighth grader at Pacific Northern Academy, spending her 13th birthday in rehearsals this week was exactly where she wanted to be. Meridian has enjoyed performing in other shows such as Alaska Theatre of Youth’s *Magical Adventures of Merlin* and *Beauty & the Beast*, the Music Machine Summer Workshop, and Anchorage Opera Association’s *Carmen*. In her spare time Meridian enjoys swimming, dance, singing, piano, and downhill skiing. She would like to thank her parents and her music and drama teacher, Katie Strock, for their continued support.

Augie Martinez (Tiny Tim) is six years old and happy to be playing the role of Tiny Tim in *A Christmas Carol*, Augie’s third theatrical performance. Augie enjoys mountain biking, running, skiing, and oatmeal when he is not performing in the theatre.

Charlie Martinez (Ignorance / Peter Cratchit / Fezziwig Party Guest / Thrump) is ten years old and excited to be playing the role of Peter Crachit in *A Christmas Carol*, Charlie’s third theatrical performance. Charlie hopes that you enjoy the show.

Alanté Harrap (Want / Child Ensemble / Fezziwig Party Guest) is a 10 year old fifth grader at Pacific Northern Academy and is excited to be performing with Perseverance Theatre. She has previously enjoyed performing in Alaska Theatre of Youth’s, *Beauty & the Beast*, the Music Machine Summer Workshop, and Anchorage Opera Association’s, *Carmen*. Alanté enjoys fashion designing, creating hairstyles, iceskating and downhill skiing, and is often seen sporting a sparkly pink tutu. She would like to thank her parents and friends for their ongoing support and encouragement.

Mariona Nesvick (Child Ensemble Fezziwig Party Guest)’s love for *A Christmas Carol* began with the Patrick Stewart audio book when she was two. It has remained a staple on her iPod along with *Harry Potter*, *Wee Free Men* and the infamous *Series of Unfortunate Events*. Mariona is excited to make her acting debut in a story that means so much to her. In her spare time she loves to bake, play with LEGO’s, make new friends and read. She would like to thank her family and friends for their support and coming to see the show.

Miles Dinneen (Wilberforce / David Crachit / Child Ensemble / Young Caroler) is pleased and excited to be making his professional acting debut with Perseverance Theatre. At eleven, Miles has enjoyed participating in Alaska Theatre of Youth’s summer conservatory for the past four years. Miles also plays competitive hockey and soccer and is in the spanish immersion program working on dual language fluency.

Sean Martin (Boy Scrooge / Runcorn / Child Ensemble)

Mischa Shimek (Musician) is currently a student majoring in music performance at the University of Alaska Anchorage. He has been professionally working as a musician as a lounge pianist, a church pianist, and a member of the UAA Guitar Ensemble under the direction of Dr. Armin Abdihodzic. For three years he has been working with Perseverance Theater in past productions including *A Christmas Carol* and a soloist for *The Blue Bear*. He has also played in TBA Theater in their production of *The Fiddler on the Roof*. Mischa pursues to support the performing arts in Alaska.

Nate Berry (Musician)

Michael Haney (Director / Co-Adapter) See page 15.
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PROFILES

Tom Robenolt (Associate Director) is the marketing and box office manager at Perseverance Theatre in Juneau. Tom has directed and acted for Perseverance Theatre, Fairbanks Shakespeare Theatre and The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey among other companies since 2000.

Kristen Vierthaler (Choreographer) has choreographed over 70 shows in the Anchorage area over the last 17 years including for UAA, ADT, Cryanos, ACT, the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra, Anchorage Concert Chorus and more. Prior to that, Kristen danced professionally in Las Vegas Production shows, worked as a dancer and line captain for Crystal Cruise lines, Kristen is also a co-founder of Theater Artists United (TAU) a musical theater company which produces big spectacle musicals as well as numerous commercial shows. She is thrilled to have the chance to work with Perseverance Theatre.

Art Rotch (Set Designer) See page 21

Jim Sale (Lighting Designer) has designed over 600 operas, plays, ballets and concerts over his career including several years at the Alaska Repertory Theatre and the Perseverance Theater. He is very happy to be back in Anchorage again. James is also the owner of JSL, Inc. JSL specializes in architectural lighting and lighting control.

Lucy Peckham (Sound Designer) is honored and delighted to again be part of this lovely, timeless tale with this wonderful company. Recent designs heard in Anchorage with her original music include Othello, Annapurna, An Iliad, and The Blue Bear. Other recent designs include A Midsummer Night’s Dream for TBA Theatre, and The Gulag Mouse for Toss Pot Productions. Documentary work includes Alaska’s Marine Highway airing on public television nationally. Lucy is a recipient of an L.A. Critics Circle Dramalogue Award for sound design. She is a cellist, a live music engineer, and collects and creates custom sound effects. www.both-ears.com

BJ Brooks (Production Stage Manager) is excited to explore Alaska with Perseverance Theatre. Born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, BJ has been across the world on tour and is thrilled to be in the beautiful landscape of Alaska to continue working with talented artists. After receiving a BS from the University of Evansville, BJ has stage managed in Atlanta at The Center for Puppetry Arts, The Rialto Center for the Arts and Pinch ‘N’ Ouch Theatre; in Annapolis with Compass Rose Theatre and spent summers in Holland, Michigan with Hope Summer Repertory Theater. When not stage managing, BJ can be found mixing concerts or experimenting in the kitchen.

Michael Ward (Assistant Stage Manager) is excited to be making his Perseverance Theatre debut on this production. As a proud AEA member he has had the pleasure of working on numerous productions at Arena Stage in Washington, DC as well as assisting with both theatrical productions and corporate events around DC. He attended the University of Evansville receiving a BS in Theater as well as completing a semester abroad working with The Florence International Theater Company. Many thanks to all who allowed him to follow his dream and achieve his goals, it wouldn’t have been possible without each and every one of you.

Adi Davis (Child Wrangler/ASM 2) is a technical theatre and political science major at University of Alaska-Anchorage, she has been doing theatre in some capacity since she was a kid. She has been involved in various productions at UAA, both on and off the stage (however she feels most comfortable in a position where the audience can’t see her). Her most recent credits include stage managing for UAA’s recent production of 44 Plays for 44 Presidents. Her current career aspirations include graduate school for scenic design and traveling the world doing theatre.
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ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHTS

Arlitia Jones is a poet, playwright, co-founder of TossPot Productions in Anchorage. Her play Tornado was a winner in the 38th Samuel French OOB Short Play Festival. Come to me, Leopards, workshop production, Cyrano’s Theatre, 2013. Rush at Everlasting premiered at Perseverance Theatre, 2014. Jones received a 2014 Rasmuson Individual Artists Award. She is a member of Seattle Repertory Theatre’s Playwrights’ Group. Her latest play Summerland was workshopped at Seattle Rep’s New Play Festival, 2014 and will be read in TossPot Productions Readings for the Dark Times, Jan. 19, 2015 at Cyrano’s. Jones is a a member of Dramatists’ Guild of America. www.arlitia.com

Michael Haney (Director / Co-Adapter) is celebrating his 44th year in the professional theatre. He is an Associate Artist at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park where he has directed Double Indemnity, Speaking in Tongues, The Syringa Tree, Crime & Punishment, The Understudy, Blackbird, Bad Dates, A Christmas Carol (1993-2015) and the world premieres of A Delicate Ship, Hiding Behind Comets, The History of Invulnerability. Off-Broadway: Around the World in 80 Days for the Irish Repertory Theatre. For Cincinnati’s Ensemble Theatre: An Iliad, Freud’s Last Session, Time Stands Still and Souvenir. He has also directed for: Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Vienna’s English Theatre, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis and Actor’s Theatre of Louisville among many others. As an actor he appeared on and off Broadway and in the American premier of Nicholas Nickleby. He plays Cate Blanchett’s father-in-law in the newly released movie CAROL. He is married to actress Amy Warner.

A Conversation with the Adapters of A Christmas Carol

In 2014, Perseverance Theatre commissioned Arlitia Jones and Michael Evan Haney to adapt Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol for the stage. This new adaptation had its World Premiere last year in Anchorage. Co-adapter Arlitia Jones, an Anchorage-based playwright, began her writing career as a poet. She has won many prizes for her writing, including a 2013 Individual Artist Fellowship from the Rasmuson Foundation, allowing her to dedicate four months solely to writing. Co-adapter and director Michael Evan Haney, currently one of Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park’s associate artists, has directed A Christmas Carol each year for over 20 years. He has directed shows all across America and internationally, in more than 100 venues. This year, as Perseverance Theatre prepared to mount Arlitia Jones’ and Michael Evan Haney’s adaptation of A Christmas Carol once more, we spoke with both adapters about the magic of A Christmas Carol.

Q: What is the appeal of Charles Dickens’ novella A Christmas Carol?

Michael Evan Haney: I like to describe A Christmas Carol as the second greatest story ever told. That’s why it has flourished for 150 years as the go-to story at Christmas time. Dickens’ use of language rivals Shakespeare’s – and I think his storytelling surpasses Shakespeare’s. Dickens’ stories are populated by characters who are just so memorable. And real; everyone has known a Scrooge. We’ve also known a Cratchit family, a nephew Fred, and a Belle – Dickens’ characters are recognizable to us even in our modern-day lives. Although Dickens wrote pre-Freudian, and the reason why Scrooge was a miser did not interest him in the way that it interests a modern audience, we get a sense of Scrooge’s loneliness in the scenes from childhood. We are told that Scrooge is “as solitary as an oyster.” Losing Belle hurts Scrooge so much that he builds up a hard, protective shell so that he never has to feel like that again.

Arlitia Jones: Dickens has always been one of my favorite authors. I started reading his novels in junior high. I devoured his diction and humor and larger than life characters with their funny names and eccentric habits. It was college when I learned Dickens first wrote A Christmas Carol as part of his wish “to deliver a sledge-hammer blow on behalf of the Poor Man’s child.” A Christmas Carol was indeed a smashing blow. The darkness in his novels is heavy; the light when it comes is blazing. Dickens was never afraid of extremes. I think I’ve always been a sort of “old fashioned” writer. I love the high style of the Victorians with their complex sentences and their “four-cylinder” words, as an old-time Alaskan friend of mine (who could’ve passed for a modern-day Fezziwig in flannel and denim) used to call them.

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VERA STARBAR
DIRECTED BY
LARISSA FASTHORSE

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Q: What was the adaptation process like? How did you prepare and what was important for you to keep in mind while working?

MEH: I’ve been doing this play for many years, and I knew that this adaptation needed care and attention to be done well. The richness of Dickens’ language is one of the most beautiful things about *A Christmas Carol*, so we’ve tried to stay as true to Dickens’ original language as possible – anything less would be a disservice to the audience. Like Shakespeare, Dickens requires of his audience that they engage with this elevated language and embrace it. We wouldn’t try to modernize Shakespeare’s language, and we shouldn’t try to modernize Dickens’, either. For this adaptation, Arlitia put the words on the paper and I edited, rearranged, gave notes, and together we came up with a final version. Lots of scenes lifted directly off the page, but other scenes had to be dramatized based on passages in Dickens’ novella that were written without dialogue. Arlitia took those parts and crafted the words and made it sound like Dickens – and at the same time, it has a little bit of her in there, too.

AJ: Before beginning work on this adaptation, I steeped myself in Dickens for several months, reading *Bleak House* for the first time, rereading *Great Expectations*, and rereading *A Christmas Carol* at least once a week. Working with Michael Haney has been one of the most rewarding collaborations I’ve had so far in theatre. His very real connection to the story and his understanding of Scrooge’s dilemma and final redemption kept the script focused and tight. Michael was definitely a guidepost for me when I tended to spin out on a tangent, lost in the beautiful language of 19th century London. Together we’ve shaped an adaptation we’re very proud of, that stays true to the original story and its intent. Most of the dialogue in the original novella is preserved in this stage adaptation. In the in-between sections, when I had to make it up, I did what all playwrights do—imagined what it would be to be in the lives of these characters. Most of them are so familiar to me. In rehearsal this year I had to come up with some ad lib lines for the Cratchit family as they are coming to table with Christmas dinner. I could have had them say anything, but there is Mrs. Cratchit carrying that goose and what came to mind was my brother and I when we were the ages of the Cratchit children, how every time any kind of fowl was served to us our first thought was for the wishbone. So the Cratchit children bring their wishes to table and this production becomes deeply personal for me.

Q: What makes *A Christmas Carol* important?

MEH: The message: that we’re all fellow travelers to the grave, and we need to help each other, and love each other, and especially help those who are needy. And unfortunately, that message needs to be heard every year. The story of Scrooge’s reclamation is the perfect lens through which to learn that lesson: he starts out alone, he’s got all this wealth, he doesn’t put it to good use (he doesn’t even splurge on himself and send it back into the economy) - he just hoards it. Then when he learns the joy of giving, it makes him cry, and it makes us cry. Hopefully this play makes you want to be a more generous human being, especially at this most wonderful time of the year.

AJ: *A Christmas Carol* tells the truth about us in a very fundamental way. Deep down we are kind and generous and our need to receive love is as strong as our need to give love. I think we all have a *Christmas Carol* moment in our lives. For me, it was when I was very young moving with my family to Alaska. I’ll never forget our first Christmas so far away from back-home, we were welcomed into a long-time Alaskan’s home who knew that while my family didn’t have much in the way of material possessions, we brought love and kindness and we were so grateful to share it among friends. Every time I see *A Christmas Carol*, or read it or even watch the Fezziwig party in rehearsal, I am that seven year old girl again welcomed inside out of the cold Anchorage night to a Christmas feast in a room full of laughing people. The Christmas Spirit is real. The story asks us to think about the future. The Ghost of Christmas Present warns Scrooge that Tiny Tim will die if “these shadows of the present remain unaltered by the Future.” In the end there is redemption, Scrooge’s, Ours, all of Mankind’s. After a night of hauntings, in the morning there is still time to change our lives, to reverse the courses of Ignorance and Want, by thinking of our fellow travelers on this earth. That’s the power of *A Christmas Carol*. 
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WHO WE ARE

Perseverance Theatre believes theatregoing creates shared experiences for our communities, fosters empathy, builds relationships, and cultivates communication skills, and in the process better equips us all to solve problems together and create more vital and just communities.

The mission of Perseverance Theatre is to create professional theatre by and for Alaskans. Perseverance values community engagement, cross-cultural collaboration, professional rigor, and regional voice. Alaska is full of stories and characters that aren’t found anywhere else in the world. Perseverance is committed to creating theatre that represents all that is great about Alaska, and to bringing great live theatre to our Alaskan audiences.

In 1979, Molly Smith founded Perseverance Theatre, following her dream of starting a professional theatre company in her hometown. Over thirty seven years, Perseverance has grown to serve over 24,000 audience members statewide, employ over 150 artists, and engage 200 volunteers annually to produce a season of classical, contemporary, and world premiere productions on our stages.

Perseverance believes that professional theatres play a vital role in training and cultivating the next generation of artists and audiences. The theatre's education department produces extensive education and training programs including Drama School, Summer Theatre Arts Rendezvous, Theatre in the Wild, mainstage student matinees, and internships. Perseverance is the resident theatre at the University of Alaska Southeast: we develop curricula, provide teachers for the theatre minor program, and invite UAS students into the theatre to work and learn along-side theatre professionals from all over the world.

Perseverance has premiered over 70 new plays by Alaskan and national playwrights. Perseverance has a national profile and a grassroots style. We are committed to developing artists, volunteers, audiences, and programming reflective of the Alaskan community, and to delivering the finest professional theatre anywhere to our loyal, local audience.

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If you have 9 friends, co-workers, or clients who would like to join you for a night at Perseverance Theatre, then we have a deal for you. Groups of 10 or more receive a 25% discount on tickets. Tours, and other incentives may be available for large groups. Ask your company to become an Alaska Business Partner to get this deal every time you call.

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BUILDING ACTORS-IN-RESIDENCE

Back in 2012, supported by Theatre Communications Group’s Think It program, Perseverance’s Artistic Director Art Rotch, and Artistic Associate Shona Osterhout travelled to a dozen Alaskan communities, from Bethel to Ketchikan, to learn from Alaskan actors about acting in Alaska. They asked: Do you support yourself acting? Do you know anyone who does? Everywhere they went, talking to dozens of great, committed Alaskan actors, the answer was the same to both questions: No.

Alaska can do better.

Perseverance believes that Alaskan actors, given more time to focus on their craft, have much to offer our communities and the theatre field. Actors are great communicators, often make fantastic teachers, and observe human behavior and relationships in fascinating ways. While most actors will always choose to support themselves through more traditional work and act in the evenings and weekends, supporting a small core whose primary focus is acting and sharing their skills with the theatre and the community adds great value to Perseverance’s work and to Alaskans’ capacity to tell our own stories in our own ways.

In 2013, with the generous support of the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, Perseverance began a three-year experiment to explore supporting a small corps of actors working at livable wages at the theatre. Over a three-year period, the theatre is exploring the best way for Perseverance to invest in and support professional actors: how they could work on the stage and also behind the scenes as teachers, engage in community outreach, and contribute to artistic projects that last longer than a twelve-week contract.

The new Actor-in-Residence initiative will provide another tool to invest more in artists, especially actors, living in our state. The first phase began two seasons ago with hiring one of our most productive actors, Enrique Bravo, as the 2013-2014 Artistic Company Lead and continued with the addition of James Sullivan. In the current season, Bravo and Sullivan have transition from part-time to full-time positions. They will act on our stages, teach at UAS and the The Drama School at Perseverance, facilitate a monthly play-reading series, and help in other outreach opportunities. The new answer to how many actors in Alaska support themselves from their craft is now: at least two.

To share your thoughts about this project, or learn more about training and employment with Perseverance Theatre as an artist, contact us at info@ptalaska.org.

LEADERSHIP

Art Rotch (Executive Artistic Director) has worked in Alaskan theatre since 1988, and is in his eighth season as artistic director at Perseverance Theatre. He holds a BA in history from Harvard and a MFA in theatre from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts. His home is in Juneau with his wife, Akiko Nishijima, who is a theatre designer, professor and scenic artist. As Artistic Director at Perseverance, Art has commissioned half a dozen plays, and produced the premieres of Battles of Fire and Water (performed in Russian, English and Tlingit) and Warriors by Dave Hunsaker, The Blue Bear by Luan Schooler and Leon Ingulsrud and Rush at Everlasting by Arlitia Jones. A set and lighting designer, Art has designed dozens of productions for Perseverance, Anchorage Opera and many more Alaskan producers; for regional theatres, including the People’s Light and Theatre Company, Sacramento Theatre Company, Aspen Opera Center; and, in New York City, Juilliard, The Manhattan School of Music. Art is a member of the National Theatre Conference (nationaltheatreconference.org), and is a graduate of the Foraker Group’s Catalyst for Non Profit Excellence program. Art was selected as one of 50 arts leaders from around the world by National Arts Strategies to participate in their Chief Executive Program and completed the Foraker Group’s Catalyst for Non Profit Excellence program. Thank you for supporting Alaskan theatre.

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INTERNSHIPS

Perseverance Theatre’s Internship program provides the only on-the-job theatre training in the state for a season-long experience in our artistic, production, or administrative departments. Over the last 20 years, we’ve worked with 90 interns aged 17-65 from rural and urban Alaska (e.g. Klukwan, Homer, Sitka, Cheva, Hooper Bay, Nome, Anchorage, Fairbanks, Tok) as well as from the Lower 48.

Anne Szeliski (Production Intern) hails from Seattle and went to Whitman College where she graduated with a BA in Theatre with a focus in Stage Management. This past summer she interned at Chicago Shakespeare Theater working in their Costume Crafts Department. She is very excited to be working at Perseverance and thanks them for this wonderful opportunity.

Lizzie Buchanan (Artistic Intern) graduated from Hamilton College in 2015 with a double major in Theatre and Mathematics. In 2014 she studied at the London Dramatic Academy, a conservatory acting program in London. Lizzie has moved from the suburbs of Boston, MA to join Perseverance Theatre for the 2015-16 season.

Marley Horner (Technical Intern) has been both on and behind the stage his entire life in Alaska, between Haines, Sitka, Fairbanks and now Juneau. Having just finished his BA in theatre at UAF, he is excited to be part of the Perseverance team as this year’s technical intern, as well as getting the chance to keep performing. His most recent productions have been as Amir in The Ash Girl, and his thesis role as Inspector Goole in An Inspector Calls. When he’s not acting, building sets or designing sound, you’d find him brewing beer, rafting rivers, or trying to find a way to do all of it at the same time.

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by Vera Starbard
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April 15-24, 2016
The dawn of the age of electricity births a groundbreaking piece of technology. Come discover how psychology and technology intersect at the dawn of the electric age. Perfect gentleman and inventor, Dr. Givings has created a new device to treat “hysteria” in his patients by inducing “paroxysms,” that attract the attention of his wife, who hears the sounds of success through the walls of his operating theatre. Meanwhile, Mrs. Givings struggles with a new baby and her own urgent desires. In the Next Room, or the vibrator play is a modern comedy of manners full of exploration and fulfillment.

Sweeney Todd
The Demon Barber of Fleet Street
Music by Stephen Sondheim
Book by Hugh Wheeler
From an adaptation by Christopher Bond
May 20 – May 29, 2016
Benjamin Barker returns to London bent on revenge after fifteen years in an Australian penal colony serving time for a crime he did not commit. Armed with a sharp, straight razor, he sets up shop as one of the finest barbers in the city, calling himself Sweeney Todd. When he meets Mrs. Lovett, a local pie maker who will do anything for him, Todd’s plan for vengeance takes the shape of a savory pie filling, and the blood starts flowing. How far will the gruesome scheme go before anyone catches a whiff of it? Will Sweeney Todd become London’s most notorious killer? This Tony-award winning musical is one tasty piece of theatre that will leave you wanting more!

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Each year, Perseverance Theatre brings theatre artists to Alaska to perform, direct, design, inspire, and share skills. If you love Alaska and want to share your home, your car, a trail, or a meal with a guest artist during the mainstage season, we would love to connect you! Our local hosts make an incredible difference in our artists’ experiences.

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Contact Kathleen Harper, Production Manager, at kathleen@ptalaska.org

Stay up to date by joining the Perseverance Theatre Mailing List

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Perseverance uses a group process to help select the plays you see here. Each year, a dozen or so people set goals for what the coming season programming can be, which are discussed with the staff for the practical issues, and board, artists and staff for big picture goals. The volunteer group spends a few weeks reading plays and each member makes a sample season line-up, and then we discuss each line up in detail considering the goals. The group is picked to include a range of the kind of people involved with Perseverance, and includes actors, writers, other artists, board, staff, and audience members. The goal is an ongoing thoughtful conversation about what makes a good season based on the goals we make together. The same group also reviews the comments you return to us in the audience response surveys, attendance, and our own impressions of the seasons, in order to learn from each season what worked well and where we want to do better for you in the future. The 15-16 season planning group is listed below, plus the goals we set for our work on the 2016-17 season selections, which will be announced this winter. If you’re interested in participating in the future, you are welcome to leave your name and contact with our house manager.

Enrique Bravo, Actor-in-Residence
Jay Burns, Actor and Writer
Bostin Christopher, Actor and Artist
Bryan Crowder, Actor and Student
Allison Holtkamp, Actor
Arilitia Jones, Writer
Dana Owen, Audience Member
Teresa K Pond, Director
James Sullivan, Actor-in-Residence
Luan Schooler, Writer and Dramaturg
Erin Tripp, Actor
Hannah Jo Wolf, Director and Dramaturg

Summary of the goals we picked for 2016-17, which are similar to what was used for 2015-16:
1. Serve Perseverance’s mission to make theatre for Alaskans.
2. Reach an audience of a certain size.
3. Give subscribers a fun and varied line-up so seeing the whole season is rewarding.
4. Fill the calendar in Juneau and Anchorage.
5. Be a good fit for the time of year the play runs.
6. Not exceed the theatre’s budget.
7. Include varied perspectives from diverse writers and roles for diverse actors.
8. Appeal to many diverse audiences with variety over the course of the year.
DONATE TO PERSEVERANCE

Your support makes possible the artistic quality you enjoy at Perseverance Theatre. Your tax-deductible donation makes it possible for the theatre to continue to grow and take risks. It makes pay-as-you-can performances and student matinees possible. Ticket sales and other earned income only cover half of Perseverance’s operating budget. Tough times in Alaska make giving from individuals like you even more vital to our day-to-day operations. THANK YOU for being part of Perseverance Theatre! Please consider deepening your support and becoming a donor today. Make a secure donation on our website at ptalaska.org/donate-now/

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In 2010, Perseverance Theatre’s thirty first season, the theatre launched its Fourth Decade Plan to secure a strong future for professional theatre in Alaska by expanding audiences and investing more in the Alaskan theatre artists we employ. The theatre set a goal of raising $1,000,000 in the first 4 years, above and beyond typical annual fundraising, is proud to have met this goal in December, 2014. Funds supported the theatre’s development of its actors-in-residence program, the expansion of Anchorage programming and our efforts to offer more livable wages to Alaskan artists. Going forward, the larger audience base secured through working in more of Alaska will ensure a strong and vital Perseverance out into the future. Thank you to all the donors who joined the Fourth Decade Fund by giving $250 or more, beyond their annual gifts.

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