



Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

Going to see *A Christmas Carol*

Ford's Theatre: Sensory-Friendly Performance Pre-Visit Story

Ford's Theatre



Photo of Ford's Theatre ©Maxwell MacKenzie.

I am going to Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C.,
to see a play called *A Christmas Carol*.

A Christmas Carol



Photo of the cast by Carol Rosegg.

The play *A Christmas Carol* is based on the novel by Charles Dickens. The play tells a story with actors talking, singing and dancing on the stage.

In the play, the people are acting out a story about a man named Ebenezer Scrooge, who is transformed from being a selfish and unkind person to a very loving and selfless person.

Actors will walk through the theatre near me. They may interact with me, and it's okay to say hello when they do.

Stage



Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

The things on stage (called “the set”) for *A Christmas Carol* will change many times during the show.

I will see an office, a bedroom, inside different homes, a graveyard, street scenes and other places in the show’s past, present and future.

Music



Photo of the young cast by Carol Rosegg.

There will be recorded music playing throughout the show.

The music can be both loud and soft at times.

The actors will sing songs with the music.

Special Effects



Photo of Joe Mallon and Craig Wallace by Carol Rosegg.

The show has many colorful lights.

Sometimes, there are spotlights that move around on stage.

When the Ghost of Jacob Marley and the Ghost of Christmas Future appear, there is stage fog, flashes of light and loud sounds of thunder.

Take a look at the behind-the-scenes resource to learn more about special effects in this production.

A Ghost Story of Christmas



Photo of Rayanne Gonzales by Carol Rosegg.

In order for Scrooge to learn his lesson, he must be visited by ghosts.

Sometimes the ghosts are also called "spirits."

Some of the ghosts look scary and some of the ghosts look friendly. The ghosts are not real. They are actors playing pretend and helping to tell the story.

Past, Present and Future



Photo of Bueka Uwemedimo, Jonathan Atkinson, Kristen Garaffo, Awa Sal Secka and Craig Wallace by Carol Rosegg.

The story of *A Christmas Carol* is set in the 1850s, but it doesn't all take place in the 1850s. Scrooge visits his past, present and future with the help of three ghosts. When Scrooge is with the ghosts, none of the other characters can see or hear him.

When he visits the past, he is seeing things he remembers when he was young. They've already happened to him; so he cannot change them.

When he visits the present, he sees people and events happening at the same time in different places in the city. Even though the characters cannot see or hear him, the Ghost of Christmas Present does a little magic to help Scrooge connect with the people he visits.

When Scrooge visits the future, he is seeing things that could happen based on all the choices he's made in his life. The future has not happened yet; it can be changed.

The Cratchit Family



Photo of Yesenia Iglesias, Gregory Maheu, August McFeaters, William Young, Ariel Russell and Natalie Cavender by Carol Rosegg.

Bob Cratchit works for Scrooge.

His son, Tiny Tim, is very sick and uses a crutch to walk.

The Cratchits love each other very much.

The Ghost of Jacob Marley



Photo of Craig Wallace and Stephen F. Schmidt by Scott Suchman.

Jacob Marley is the first ghost to visit Scrooge. He is a very scary ghost.

He is covered in heavy chains, representing how he was greedy and selfish when he was alive. It is a terrible punishment.

Marley performs magic to get Scrooge to believe him. This part can be loud and scary, but the actors are just pretending and it is part of telling the story.

The ghost of Marley scene is about six minutes long.

The Ghost of Christmas Past



Photo of Justine "Icy" Moral and Craig Wallace by Scott Suchman.

The Ghost of Christmas Past is the first Christmas spirit that Scrooge meets.

She is very beautiful and flies around the stage.

She shows him Christmases from his past.

He sees his sister, Fan, his first employer, Mr. Fezziwig, and the woman he used to love, Belle.

The Ghost of Christmas Present



Photo of Craig Wallace and Rayanne Gonzales by Carol Rosegg.

The Ghost of Christmas Present is the second Christmas spirit Scrooge meets.

She is jolly and friendly to everyone.

She shows him what Christmas Day is like in the present.

They visit Scrooge's nephew Fred and the Cratchit Family.

The Ghost of Christmas Future



Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

The Ghost of Christmas Future is the final Christmas spirit Scrooge meets.

This spirit is also called "The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come."

The ghost flies and does not speak. This spirit can be very scary. The ghost is an actor pretending to be a ghost.

They see people Scrooge knows and they visit a graveyard.

The Ghost of Christmas Future is on stage for about 12 minutes.

Redemption



Photo of Maria Egler and Craig Wallace by Carol Rosegg.

At the beginning of the story, Scrooge is mean and selfish. But the three Christmas spirits teach him the importance of love and kindness.

Scrooge is changed at the end of the story.

He keeps Christmas in his heart all year long and not just on Christmas day.

Scrooge helps Tiny Tim and the Cratchit family.

He shares love and kindness with everyone around him.

GOING TO SEE A *CHRISTMAS CAROL* – CREDITS

All stage photos are from the Ford's Theatre production of *A Christmas Carol*.

The pre-visit materials were developed by:

Ford's Theatre Access Committee

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