

A CHRISTMAS CAROL



starring

Anthony Rodriguez

adapted by

Tony Brown

directed by

Katie Erin Chambers



Season 28



FROM THE CO-FOUNDER

Every year, I hope the holiday season becomes the "Best Christmas Ever." From decorating the LAC to opening *Christmas Canteen* and *A Christmas Carol*, I want everything to be perfect. At home, I love decorating our trees. (One tree is solely dedicated to musical instruments.) As I pull out every ornament, I yell to Anthony who is usually in the kitchen, "Look at this one. It's my absolute favorite." My parents and I started getting Anthony Santa ornaments 28 years ago because he said he loved Santa one day in passing. I will admit my family went a little overboard.

Almost every year, one of these treasured pieces shatters. I become distraught, just like the mom in Tony DiTerlizzi's children's book, *The Broken Ornament*. I set up the Santa Hospital, where I use various glues, ribbons, and tweezers to repair and rehang. In the book, Jack breaks one into a million glittery pieces and says, "It's just a junky old ornament. We will get another one."

Then the book beautifully recounts why it is impossible to replace what is lost.



This Christmas, I feel like one of those shattered baubles. I just don't have the Christmas spirit. My mother Carolyn is now in assisted living, where I have set up my temporary office. She is my personal Christmas ornament. And when you ask about her, you mend her in the most beautiful ways.

Many of you in our audience are working to glue your cherished ornament back together too. What a blessing that so many of you share with me your health struggles, your challenges, and your losses. Carolyn has given me the gift of what it feels like to be broken and keep going.

Aurora needs more than a little glue and ribbon this season. Theatres all across the nation have closed, and Georgia is 50th in arts funding. Our ticket sales are wonderful. People are coming in droves to see our shows and attend our concerts. While *Christmas Canteen* plays our Grand Stage, there is something happening in all 4 of our spaces all the time and that requires staff to set up, tear down, sell tickets, and man the bar. Plus, as a professional theatre, we are committed to artist compensation. We employ more than 250 actors, technicians, and musicians each year. But the fact is it is very expensive to operate the LAC campus. It costs \$500,000 a year to keep the lights on, make sure it is clean, safe, warm or cool.



To help Aurora continue our vital work, we received a challenge grant; an angel willing to match your kindness. So this holiday, please consider 2 things:

1. Buy two Mini Season Tickets to give friends to join you for every show.
2. Please consider an end of year gift so that we can continue to bring you the irreplaceable, original shows handmade by Atlanta artists.

When you come to *Christmas Canteen* or any other Aurora show, you get something you cannot get anywhere else – **MAGIC**. No rented sets, no tracked music, no karaoke singing, but high caliber artists who regularly appear on your television and movie screens who are committed to regional excellence that can only be found at Aurora.

Tinsel tells Jack, "I can give you every ornament in the North Pole, but it won't replace the one you broke." We are asking for your help to glue this beautiful, fragile, organization back together.



May this *Canteen & Carol* season be filled with grace, kindness and a little extra love,

Ann-Carol Pence

Ann-Carol Pence
Co-Founder
Producing Artistic Director

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The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.



PRODUCTION STAFF

Co-Founder/Producing Artistic Director	ANN-CAROL PENCE
Managing Director.....	KATIE PELKEY
Director of Production/Director.....	KATIE ERIN CHAMBERS
Stage Manager	RAKAELA THOMPSON
Projections Designer	MILTON CORDERO
Production Manager/Sound Designer.....	DANIEL POPE
Head of Lighting/Lighting Designer	ISAAC BURRIER

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



ANTHONY RODRIGUEZ (he/him-Scrooge, Et al.) a career non-profit leader, is proud to be the first Executive Director of the Hub404 Conservancy. HUB404 is an innovative 9-acre “cap park” that will soar above GA 400 and provide a direct connection to MARTA’s Buckhead rail station. HUB404 will create a dynamic, active, gathering place for the Metro-Atlanta region and transform the core of Buckhead. Prior to joining HUB404, Anthony was President and CEO of Aurora Theatre, a professional theatre he co-founded 26 years ago. He currently serves on various boards, both nationally and locally, including Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, National Alliance for Musical Theatre (Vice President), Theatre Communications Group, the Citizens Advisory Board for Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful, and the Advisory Board for Public Broadcasting Atlanta which includes the NPR station WABE and PBS station PBA30. Anthony is a past Chair of the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, the first Latino and first Arts Leader to hold that position. He served as Vice Chair of Arts for the Chamber and Chair of Partnership Gwinnett and serves on the National Steering Committee for the Latinx Theatre Commons. Anthony is a graduate of the Atlanta Regional Commission’s Regional Leadership Institute, Leadership Atlanta (#2classes) and the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures’ Leadership Institute and Advocacy Institute, all three exemplary programs for leaders who want to spearhead transformational change in community. To date, Anthony’s greatest accomplishment has been the successful negotiation that relocated Aurora Theatre to downtown Lawrenceville in 2007. Under his leadership, Aurora became the second largest professional theatre in the state of Georgia, producing 850 events and entertaining more than 80,000 visitors each year. Aurora’s critical success inspired the City of Lawrenceville to invest in a \$35 million campus expansion. The Lawrenceville Arts Center (LAC) opened in October of 2021, and Aurora continues to serve as the resident theatre company and management agent. LAC now serves as a cultural gathering place and an arts education incubator for the entire Metro Atlanta region. Anthony, born in New York, and raised in Atlanta, graduated from the University of Georgia with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre. He resides in Duluth with his partner in life, Ann-Carol Pence, and their dog Bella.

PRODUCTION STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

TONY BROWN (Adapter) is honored to be a part of this annual Aurora holiday tradition. A member of Aurora’s Summer Concert Series (*The Music Man, Guys and Dolls, Annie Get Your*

Gun, and *The Wizard of Oz*), he has appeared on Aurora's mainstage as Merlin in *Camelot*, as well as the Interlocutor in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* and Colonel Mustard in *Clue: The Musical*. He also directed the Suzi nominated *Over the River and Through the Woods*. Tony is a senior company member in his 26th consecutive season with the Atlanta Shakespeare Company. Directing: *A Christmas Carol* (in its 14th year), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *A Man for All Seasons*, *Our Town*, *Cymbeline*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Tempest* and *King Lear*. Acting credits exceed 3,200 performances, and having completed Shakespeare's canon. Favorite roles: King John of France in *Edward III*, Lord Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Bellomy in *The Fantasticks*, Senex in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, and every role Shakespeare wrote for Sir John Falstaff (*Henry IV*, Parts 1 and 2 and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*). He's also acted for Georgia Ensemble Theatre and acted and directed for Art Within. He wishes to thank the good people of Gwinnett for placing this theatre at the heart of its social and cultural life, and Tony Rodriguez for this glorious 11 year partnership. Love to Sharon, Bradshaw and Nola. Non nobis, non nobis, Domine, sed nomini tuo da Gloriam!

KATIE ERIN CHAMBERS (she/her-Director) is in her 10th season with Aurora Theatre. Previous directing credits include this year's *Christmas Canteen*, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* for Aurora's Learning Library Series, *Fish Eye* for the Aurora AppCo Alumni series, and a touring version of *A Christmas Carol* to visit local schools. After serving as Aurora's Resident Stage Manager since 2014, Katie is stepping into a new role as Director of Production & Apprentice Company. She is a graduate of the University of Georgia, a member of Actor's Equity, and a proud alumna of Aurora's AppCo14. She has also stage managed in Atlanta for Horizon Theatre Company, Theatrical Outfit, Synchronicity Theatre and Habima Theatre, and has served as co-ordinator for the New South Young Playwrights' Festival, production manager for the Atlanta Musical Theatre Festival, and coordinator for the Atlanta Unified Auditions.

RAKAELA THOMPSON (she/her-Stage Manager) is super honored and grateful to be part of the Aurora AppCo24 family this year! RaKaela recently served as a Swing in Aurora's *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*. Previous to her time at Aurora, she completed an apprenticeship at New-stage Theatre where she was a part of such productions as, *Sunset baby* as Nina, and *Anne & Emmett* as Mammie. She attended the University of Southern Mississippi, where she played notable roles such as, Helen HoBart in *Once in a Lifetime*, Vera in *She Kills Monsters*, and Petra Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

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End of Year Goal

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MILTON CORDERO (Projection Design) is an Actor, Projection Designer, Virtual Theatre Editor and Producer. He has an MA in Film Management and a BA in Communication with a Minor in Drama. In film and TV he worked for Canzion Films, Wiesner Distribution and CineFiesta Film Festival. Currently he produces a Kids TV segment for WIPR. Cordero's Projection Designs have been seen on stages in New York, Atlanta and Puerto Rico. Favorites credits include: *Labzik: Tale of a Clever Pup* and *The Nether* for Emory Theatre (GA), *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* for Aurora Theatre & Horizon Theatre (GA), *Tierra Mia* for Gibaro de Puerto Rico, *El Burlador de Sevilla* for Teatro Círculo (NY) 'Voces Latinx' National Playwriting Competition, virtual projects for Repertorio Español & the Miranda Family (NY), *In the Heights* (PR) and *Hands Up* for Alliance Theatre. www.miltoncordero.com

DANIEL POPE (Sound Design) is proud to be a member of the team at Aurora Theatre as Production Manager. Daniel has been a sound designer and engineer in the Atlanta area for the past nine years. He's had the pleasure of designing sound for the Aurora Theatre on many occasions on shows such as: *Into the Woods*, *Christmas Canteen*, *Sweep*, and most recently *The Bridges of Madison County*. Additionally, he's worked on countless other productions in the Atlanta theatre community including: *Evita* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* as Sound Designer and Production Manager at Serenbe Playhouse. Daniel received a Bachelors in Marketing with a specialization in sales and a minor in Music from The University of West Georgia in 2010.

ISAAC BURRIER (Lighting Design) is a lighting designer and master electrician based out of Northwest Georgia. He is excited to have recently joined the Aurora team as an overhire electrician. Isaac has worked on numerous events with Aurora including this year's *Christmas Canteen* as the Lighting Designer. Before working with Aurora, Isaac worked in Nashville, TN as a lighting and scenic designer as well as a lighting tech in Raleigh, NC. Some of his professional credits include: *Ordinary Days* (Georgia Gwinnett College), *Giant Squid* (Woven Theatre Company), *Lungs* (Woven Theatre Company), *The Whale* (Verge Theater Company), *Beneatha's Place* (Verge Theater Company) and several dance recitals with Rejoice School of Ballet. Isaac is a graduate of Belmont University with a BFA in Production Design in Theatre. www.isaacburriercreative.com

AURORA THEATRE STAFF

Co-Founder/Producing Artistic Director	ANN-CAROL PENCE
Managing Director.....	KATIE PELKEY
Complex General Manager.....	JOHN GEERTSEN
Director of Education	JASMINE RENEE' ELLIS
Education & Volunteer Coordinator.....	JAHİ BOGARD
Director of Production & Apprentice Company.....	KATIE ERIN CHAMBERS
Director of Community Impact	JACKY SEGUÍ
Director of Development	MARIA ANTONETTI
Development Associate	SUSANNA WILSON
Director of Marketing	JON CARR
Director of Sales & Programming	AL STILO
Rentals & Events Manager.....	STEPHANIE BAKER
Rentals & Events Manager.....	ALAINA HOLEMAN
Event Technical Manager	CARLOS ADORNO
Database Manager	JENNIFER OWENS
Graphic Designer & Marketing Associate.....	JUAN CARLOS UNZUETA
Marketing Associate	MAXWELL H. BREAUX
Facilities Maintenance Supervisor.....	TYLER BARRETT
Production Manager.....	DANIEL POPE
Technical Director.....	ASHLEY HOGAN
Assistant Technical Director.....	JACK BLACKSTOCK
Head of Lighting	ISAAC BURRIER
Costume Director	ALICE NEFF
Company Manager.....	GREG HUNTER
Director of Patron Services.....	DAISIE MARIE
Bookkeeper.....	MOLLY HUNTINGTON
Patron Services Associates.....	SAMI JO CASH, KENDALL BERRY,
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