

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Alert for Theatre Editors, Reviewers and Calendar Listings

Back by popular demand for the third time!

A Charlie Brown Christmas

Everyone's favorite holiday TV classic returns to Chance Theater on December 3rd

Anaheim, CA: Chance Theater, Anaheim's official resident theater company, is excited to present an encore of the extremely popular stage adaptation of ***A Charlie Brown Christmas!*** Created by Charles M. Schulz, based on the television special by Bill Melendez and Lee Mendelson, this stage adaptation by Eric Schaeffer is presented by special arrangement with Arthur Whitelaw and Ruby Persson, and will be directed by Resident Artist James Michael McHale. ***A Charlie Brown Christmas* will preview from December 3rd through 5th; regular performances will begin December 5th at 7:00 p.m. and continue through December 19th on the Fyda-Mar Stage at Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken theater arts Center.**

Join Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Lucy, Linus, and the whole Peanuts gang (again!) as they produce their own Christmas play and ultimately learn the true meaning of the season. *A Charlie Brown Christmas* is a present the whole family can enjoy! Adapted from Charles M. Schulz's timeless story, this holiday treat features the unforgettable music of Vince Guaraldi, as well as beloved holiday carols performed by the Peanuts characters. There's no better way to discover the magic of the season!

"A sweet and touching, live action version that is itself an instant holiday classic." -- *Broadway World*

"One of the best times you will have this holiday season!" - *The Show Report*

"It's impossible not to be uplifted" - *Jordan R. Young*

"In 2018, when I first directed this show, I was excited because of the honesty and directness of the story and the positive and uplifting message," said director James Michael McHale. "It's important to tell stories about acceptance and goodwill. One of the reasons Schulz' Christmas special was such a hit (despite the producers

being positive that it would flop) was because he spoke directly to feelings so many people relate to during the holidays.”

But... How do you put a TV special onstage? “When we first presented *Charlie Brown* in 2018, I wanted to find a unique approach for bringing this story to the stage,” McHale continues. “When I watched the cartoon I loved the quirkiness of the characters’ movements -- the way they bounced when they walked -- and the stilted very two-dimensional life they had on screen. We succeeded in bringing that oddness to joyful life with a unique and bold physicality by the actors. The production design really makes the cartoon come to life. Rather than seeing a fully realized version of Lucy’s psychiatry booth, you’ll see a flat, two-dimensional version that comes out of nowhere, almost like a children’s pop up book. We transform the space and surprise the audience in a very theatrical way.”

A Charlie Brown Christmas premiered on CBS on December 9, 1965. The road to television was not an easy one, and the premiere was preceded by a sense of dread from the network. The program was contradictory to all the trends at the time -- no laugh track, a jazz score, a sad tone, slower pacing, and featuring a voice cast of children. Most people expected it to be a disaster. And those people were very wrong. *A Charlie Brown Christmas* was a ratings smash hit (over 15 million households tuned in -- nearly half of the television sets in the US), and went on to win both an Emmy and the Peabody Award. It is now broadcast every year.

Joining McHale on the design team are production designers Masako Tobaru (*Sweat*) and Megan Hill (*A Wrinkle in Time*), costume designer Christina Perez (*Edges*), and stage manager Nicole Schlitt (*Edges*). Many cast members will be returning for this production, including Chance Theater Resident Artists Matt Takahashi as Charlie Brown, Laura M. Hathaway as Lucy, and Christopher Diem as Schroeder. They are joined by Dimithri Perera as Snoopy, Juston Gonzalez-Rodholm as Linus, Shai Culver as Sally, and Nathan Shube as Pig Pen.

Chance Theater’s COVID-19 policy requires General Performance ticket holders (ages 12+) to provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19. Those without proof of being fully vaccinated -- must provide proof of a negative COVID-19 PCR test taken within 72 hours (3 days) prior to entering the theater. Masks are required at all times for all patrons. Ticket holders who do not comply with these policies will not be admitted. Get the most up to date information about Chance Theater’s health and safety protocols at

www.ChanceTheater.com/safety.

Chance Theater is thankful for the support of our 2021 Season Producers Bette & Wylie Aitken, as well as 2021 Associate Season Producers, The Family of Mary Kay Fyda-Mar for helping to make this production possible.

To schedule press interviews, request photos, schedule press comps or for any additional information, please contact Casey Long at (714) 900-3284 or by e-mail at casey@chancetheater.com

ABOUT CHANCE THEATER

Proud to be one of the leading ensemble-driven theatre companies in Southern California, CHANCE THEATER has received the National Theatre Company grant from American Theatre Wing for “nurturing a community of artists in ways that strengthen and demonstrate the quality, diversity, and dynamism of American theatre.” The Chance recently won the Ovation Award for Best Production of a Musical (Intimate Theatre) for the intimate revival of *Fun Home*. Previously, Chance Theater has won seven Ovation Awards, including three for Best Production of a Musical (Intimate Theatre) for its regional premiere of *Lizzie, The Musical*, the West Coast premiere of *Triassic Park – The Musical*, and Southern California premiere of *Jerry Springer – The Opera*, as well as four LADCC Awards, including the Polly Warfield Award for Outstanding Season. The Anaheim City Council named Chance Theater “the Official Resident Theater Company of Anaheim” in 2014, and Arts Orange County has twice named the Chance as “Outstanding Arts Organization.” Known for using bold and personal storytelling to promote dialogue and connection within the Southern California theatrical landscape, the Chance is committed to contributing to a more compassionate, connected and creative community. As a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group, The Theatrical Producers League of Los Angeles, and OC Theatre Guild, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: A Charlie Brown Christmas

Everyone’s favorite holiday classic comes to life in the all-new stage adaptation! Join Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Lucy, Linus, and the whole Peanuts gang as they produce their own Christmas play and ultimately learn the true meaning of the season. *A Charlie Brown Christmas* is a present the whole family can enjoy! Adapted from Charles M. Schulz’s timeless story, this holiday treat features the unforgettable music of Vince Guaraldi, as well as beloved holiday carols performed by the Peanuts characters. There’s no better way to discover the magic of the season!

WHEN:

Preview Performances:

December 3 - 5, 2021; Fri 7:30 p.m.; Sat & Sun 1 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 6 p.m., and 7:30 p.m.

Regular Performances

December 5 - 19, 2021; Wed & Thu 7:30 p.m.; Fri 7:30 p.m.; Sat & Sun 1 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 6 p.m., and 7:30 p.m.

WHERE: Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center on the Fyda-Mar Stage

5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807

TICKETS: \$20.00 - \$35.00.

Call (888) 455-4212 or visit www.ChanceTheater.com.

Discounts available for children (ages 4-12), seniors, students, and military.

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