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HOLIDAY 2020 VIRTUAL THEATRE HIGHLIGHTS

Chicago, IL – The Chicago theatre community will produce a wide variety of online festive plays, musicals, dance and comedy offerings this Holiday season. Theatre venues in Chicago and across the world remain closed due to the COVID 19 pandemic yet the creative spirit remains as bright and optimistic as Scrooge on Christmas morning.

The following is a selection of Holiday-themed work being generated online from Chicago this season. An updated list of holiday shows with additional details about each production will be available throughout the season at ChicagoPlays.com and HotTix.org.

Several theatres are producing original productions of the holiday favorite, *A Christmas Carol*. **Goodman Theatre's *A Christmas Carol***, a holiday tradition for more than 43 years, is offering a free audio streaming version this season, from December 1-31, 2020. **Writers Theatre** is offering two unique virtual versions of *A Christmas Carol*: **Manual Cinema's *Christmas Carol***, co-commissioned by Writers Theatre, is a world premiere using hundreds of paper puppets, miniatures, silhouettes and an original score, performed live for every performance from Manual Cinema's Chicago studio in a socially distanced manner and livestreamed via Marquee TV for audiences of all ages at home, December 3-20, 2020. Artistic Director Michael Halberstam's tour-de-force solo performance of ***A Christmas Carol***, directed by Stanton Long, filmed by HMS Media, will stream December 8, 2020-January 3, 2021. **The College of DuPage's McAninch Arts Center** will film its production ***A Christmas Carol*** for audiences on Zoom, November 27-29, 2020.

Holiday online concert offerings this season include New Philharmonic livestreaming ***Holiday Sing-Along with the Symphony*** at the **McAninch Arts Center** December 12-13, 2020; Harris Theater streaming ***CMS at Home: Brandenburg Concertos*** on December 17 and 21, 2020; and Jim Brickman's interactive concert experience ***Comfort & Joy at Home***, presented with **North Central College Fine & Performing Arts** live on Zoom, December 4, 2020. On December 5, 2020, **Water People Theater** will host an online performance of ***Water People Express: A Bilingual Christmas Musical Workshop for Kids***.

Ballet Chicago will stream an archival production of ***The Nutcracker***, along with a hybrid version combining archival footage and new footage of current dancers to be filmed at the Athenaeum Theatre, streaming on Zoom December 18-20. **The Joffrey Ballet** will feature the Emmy-winning PBS documentary ***Making a New American Nutcracker*** on its website from December 1-31, 2020.

American Blues Theater is producing its interactive, music-infused, 1940s radio broadcast tradition *It's a Wonderful Life: Live in Chicago!*, performed live from actors' homes to yours on Zoom from November 12, 2020-January 2, 2021.

Lookingglass Theatre brings its holiday favorite *The Steadfast Tin Soldier* virtually for this holiday season. The spectacle of music and movement based on the story by Hans Christian Andersen, adapted and directed by Mary Zimmerman and filmed by HMS Media, December 1-27, 2020.

Steppenwolf's production of Isaac Gomez's new play *Wally World* streams online via the Steppenwolf NOW platform this December 2020. It's Christmas Eve and a group of Wally World employees are about to lose it. On the one day of the year the mega-department superstore is supposed to close its doors, secrets come to life that may destroy more than their holiday cheer.

PlayMakers Laboratory Theatre's *That's Weird, Grandma: House Par-Tay* features a creative line-up of holiday stories written by elementary school students, adapted and performed online by professional actors, December 7-28, 2020 online via Patreon.

Porchlight Music Theatre will virtually debut a holiday "get together" on December 11, 2020 available through January 3, 2021 to celebrate the winter season. *Happy Holidays from Porchlight!* features Porchlight favorites performing holiday classics and winter-themed songs from a variety of music theatre productions.

With story, music and magic, **Strawdog Theatre** brings to life the family-friendly stage adaptation of Eric Kimmel's book *Hershel and The Hanukkah Goblins*, online December 5-20, 2020.

For family streaming at home this December, **Chicago Shakespeare Theater** returns to Neverland with its wildly popular 75-minute, 2018 musical production of *Peter Pan*, directed and choreographed by Amber Mak and filmed by HMS Media.

For a comprehensive list of Chicago productions happening virtually, visit the League of Chicago Theatres websites, ChicagoPlays.com and HotTix.org.

About Chicago theatre

Chicago theatre is the leader in the U.S. with more than 250 theatres throughout Chicagoland, comprising a rich and varied community ranging from storefront, non-union theatres to the most renowned resident theatres in the country, including 5 which have been honored with Regional Tony Awards, and the largest touring Broadway organization in the nation. Chicago's theatres serve 5 million audience members annually and have a combined budget of more than \$250 million. Chicago produces and/or presents more world premieres annually than any other city in the nation. Last year alone Chicago theatre companies produced more than 100 world premiere productions and adaptations. Each year Chicago theatres send new work to resident theatres across the country, to Broadway, and around the world.

The League of Chicago Theatres' Mission Statement

Theatre is essential to the life of a great city and to its citizens. The League of Chicago Theatres is an alliance of theatres, which leverages its collective strength to support, promote and advocate for Chicago's theatre industry. Through our work, we ensure that theatre continues to thrive in our city.

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