



A Christmas Carol at Syracuse Stage - Review



Syracuse Stage, A CHRISTMAS CAROL, 2013

By Craig Thornton

Story Published: Dec 3, 2013 at 3:05 PM EST

Story Updated: Dec 4, 2013 at 7:44 PM EST

A Christmas Carol at Syracuse Stage

Syracuse Stage presents the Dickens classic in an adaption by Romulus Linney that plays through December 29th. It is directed by Peter Amster.

This handsome production is both elegant and sumptuous. Although I wouldn't call it spare or minimalist, it doesn't overplay its hand and never becomes busy, obvious or over decorated. Amster and his creative design team have made wise choices that enhance but never underline the story. Open spaces, carefully selected set pieces and a backdrop of glass panes create functionality while suggesting transparency and looking and seeing. Hanging street lamps add a realistic element to the street scenes in London, but again, suggestion rather than detailed set pieces work to the production's advantage. Linda Buchanan's scenic design is inspired and gorgeous.

Thomas C. Hase's lighting design is spectacular, and Mr. Hase makes all the right choices. Especially impressive is Marley's (Steve Brady's) initial appearance. Hase's schemes for each ghostly visit are well developed, especially the ghost of Christmas future, which is bathed in ominous hues that sometimes create giant shadows.



Scrooge is played by the affable Steven Hendrickson who effectively makes the transition from the garrulous cheapskate to the ebullient, redeemed man who awakes on Christmas morning to discover it is never too late to turn your life around.

A Christmas Carol isn't a musical, but music is integrated well as 19th century carols are sung beautifully by the cast throughout the play. Again, the emphasis is on nuance and subtlety and even though there are several Carols performed it never seems heavy or overplayed.

Syracuse Stage's A Christmas Carol is a glittering gem and the perfect medicine for the Scrooge in all of us. You will walk out elated and happily transformed into the Christmas spirit.