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Holiday Theater, in Three Flavors

By ERIK PIEPENBURG
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Instead of making Ebenezer Scrooge watch those instructive scenes from his past, present and future, perhaps the ghosts would have completed their Grinch-eradication mission faster if they'd taken him to a show. They might have come up with a list like this one, which divides some of this year's notable holiday productions into three loosely defined, Dickens-inspired categories: Past (for nostalgia lovers), Present (for current-events followers) and Future (for tech geeks or more adventurous-minded theatergoers). Tiny Tim may have wished God's blessings on everyone, but be aware that not all these shows are good for families with children.

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Sonya Farrell

Dirty Martini, who will perform in the "Gotham Burlesque Holiday Spectacular" on Dec. 17. [More Photos](#)

Multimedia

The ghost of Dickens gets a star turn in a solo version of "A Christmas Carol" at the Canal Park Playhouse. Written by Greg Oliver Bodine and directed by David F. Chapman, "A Christmas Carol, as told by Charles Dickens (himself)" uses physical comedy to

PAST

THE Irish Repertory Theater reinvents Dylan Thomas's classic story in a concert version of "A Child's Christmas in Wales." The show mixes traditional and contemporary Christmas music with Thomas's story of what happens to a boy on Christmas Day in Wales. Adapted and directed by the Irish Rep's artistic director, Charlotte Moore, the production includes Howard McGillin (seated above), Broadway's longest-running Phantom in "The Phantom of the Opera."

Theater 2020 is presenting "A Radio Christmas Carol," a radio-play version of Dickens's story that features Foley artists onstage creating sounds out of everyday materials. The show is being performed in Brooklyn Heights at the 19th-century St. Charles Borromeo Church.

The material may be current, but the storytelling is old-fashioned in "The Flying Latke," a children's Hanukkah show at the Flea Theater. The play tells the story of a boy named Danny Silverstein and a mysterious flying potato pancake that causes a U.F.O. panic, starting on the first night of Hanukkah. The work is adapted by Arthur Yorinks from his children's book.

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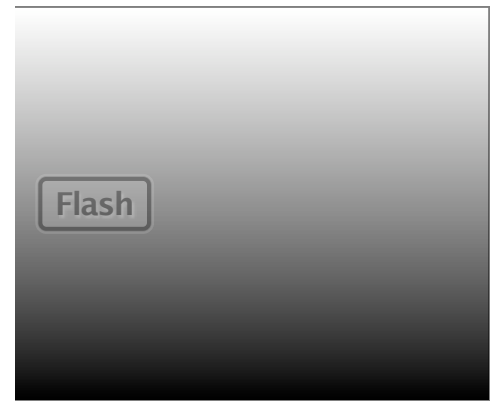
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Holiday Shows, in Many Permutations

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tell the story of Scrooge from the perspective of his creator. Brunch at the theater's Waffle Iron Cafe is available on Saturdays.

Two one-night-only shows merge the past and the present. On Dec. 17 an old art form gets an updating in the "Gotham Burlesque Holiday Spectacular," featuring the performers Dirty Martini, Jo Weldon and Tigger! and hosted by the downtown entertainer known as World Famous *BOB*. On Dec. 12 Ann Harada, who originated the role of Christmas Eve in the musical "Avenue Q," revisits the character in "Christmas Eve With Christmas Eve," a benefit concert for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

PRESENT

MOTHER GOOSE meets Occupy Wall Street in "Little Lord's Babes in Toyland," a purposefully shoddy musical revamping of Victor Herbert's 1903 operetta, "Babes in Toyland." The Brechtian-sounding "recession spectacular," as it's billed, was adapted and directed by Michael Levinton, who is said to have spent seven seasons in a Baltimore community theater production of "Babes."

The show, at the Brick Theater in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, is "not recommended for actual children," warns the Little Lord theater company's Web site.

"A Molly Jolly Christmas" is the first Christmas show starring Molly Dykeman (the alter ego of Andrea Alton), a self-described "barely lucid poet/security guard" who riffs on current events while in a pill-induced haze. Each performance will feature appearances by a rotating roster of guests, including the Village Voice gossip columnist Michael Musto, the burlesque artist Vicky Sin and the performance artist Shelly Mars.

Several gender-flexible fixtures on the performance circuit are returning to New York this year with topical shows.

The religiously anti-holiday performer Jackie Beat mounts a new show, "The Nutcracker," which includes an original holiday number called "It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Syphilis." The downtown darling Justin Vivian Bond returns to the Abrons Arts Center with "Mx. Bond's Austerity Measures: A Snow Job for the Masses," a politically minded, androgyny-embracing musical take on holiday cheer for the anti-Wall Street set.

If Scrooge had a Jewish sister with a scowl and a habit of kvetching about what's happening to the world, she might look like Jackie Hoffman in "A Chanukah Carol." In her new solo show, inspired by Patrick Stewart's "Christmas Carol," Ms. Hoffman meets the ghosts of Hanukkah Past, Present and Future, and gets a visit from the beloved Yiddish comedic actress Molly Picon.

FUTURE

THIS season brings several progressive-minded interpretations of "A Christmas Carol." Scrooge meets steampunk in Pipe Dream Theater's dark musical "3 Ghosts." In "Reid Farrington's A Christmas Carol," Mr. Farrington, a former video designer for the Wooster Group, incorporates images from 35 movie versions of Dickens's novel in an evening of film, performance and installation art. The Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance brings back its show "Los Nutcrackers" (the subtitle isn't publishable here), a blending of "The Nutcracker" and "A Christmas Carol" in which a bickering gay couple meet a thug-angel who takes them back to the night they met while dancing to Lisa Lisa & Cult Jam.

Two shows skew to the dark side. Company XIV returns with its annual Christmas-season



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adaptation of “**Snow White**,” choreographed and directed by Austin McCormick. This multimedia-rich show, which runs at the Bond Street Theater in Brooklyn, takes its inspiration from the Brothers Grimm fairy tale, mixing opera, circus, dance, projection and live performance. While not recommended for very young children, the piece will appeal to tweens and above.

Also back for another season is “**Nutcracker: Rated R**,” a sex-, drug- and secrets-filled show about a grown-up ballerina named Clara who is transported back to New York in the early 1980s. Bits of Tchaikovsky’s original score mix with modern music in a performance that also blends contemporary ballet, break dancing and burlesque. This year the show moves to the intimate nightclub Le Poisson Rouge.

Twisted ‘Nutcrackers,’ Offbeat ‘Christmas Carols’ and Hanukkah Latkes

‘**A CHANUKAH CHAROL**’ Sunday, Dec. 18 and Jan. 2, at 7:30 p.m., New World Stages, 340 West 50th Street, Clinton, (212) 239-6200, newworldstages.com; \$35 to \$55.

‘**A CHILD’S CHRISTMAS IN WALES**’ Through Dec. 31, W. Scott McLucas Theater, Irish Repertory Theater, 132 West 22nd Street, Chelsea, (212) 727-2737, irishrep.org; \$30.

‘**A CHRISTMAS CAROL, AS TOLD BY CHARLES DICKENS (HIMSELF)**’ Through Dec. 24, Canal Park Playhouse, 508 Canal Street, between Greenwich and Washington Streets, TriBeCa, (866) 811-4111, canalparkplayhouse.com; \$18.

‘**CHRISTMAS EVE WITH CHRISTMAS EVE**’ Monday, 7 p.m., Midtown Theater, 163 West 46th Street, Manhattan, (212) 840-0770, broadwaycares.org; \$30 to \$50.

‘**THE FLYING LATKE**’ Saturdays and Sundays through Dec. 18, 11 a.m., Flea Theater, 41 White Street, TriBeCa, (866) 811-4111, theflea.org; \$12.

‘**3 GHOSTS**’ pipedreamtheatre.com.

‘**GOTHAM BURLESQUE HOLIDAY SPECTACULAR**’ Dec. 17, 9:30 p.m., Triad Theater, 158 West 72nd Street, Manhattan, (800) 838-3006, triadnyc.com, gothamburlesque.com; \$35 to \$55.

‘**JACKIE BEAT: THE NUTCRACKER**’ Wednesday through Sunday, Laurie Beechman Theater, West Bank Cafe, 407 West 42nd Street, Clinton; (212) 352-3101, missjackiebeat.com; \$20 to \$22, with a \$15 food or drink minimum.

‘**LITTLE LORD’S BABES IN TOYLAND**’ Through Saturday, Brick Theater, 575 Metropolitan Avenue, between Union Avenue and Lorimer Street, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, (718) 907-6189, bricktheater.com, www.littlelord.org; \$18.

‘**LOS NUTCRACKERS**’ Through Dec. 17, Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance, 841 Barretto Street, Hunts Point, (718) 842-5223, bronxacademyofartsanddance.org; \$20 to \$25.

‘**A MOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS**’ Through Dec. 22, Laurie Beechman Theater, West Bank Cafe, 407 West 42nd Street, Clinton, (212) 352-3101, spincyclenyc.com; \$18 in advance; \$20 at the door; with a \$15 food or drink minimum.

‘**MX. BOND’S AUSTERITY MEASURES: A SNOW JOB FOR THE MASSES**’ Through Dec. 17, 8 p.m., Abrons Arts Center, 466 Grand Street, Lower East Side; (212) 598-0400, henrystreet.org; \$25, \$15 for students.

‘**NUTCRACKER: RATED R**’ Dec. 22, 23, 29 and 30, Le Poisson Rouge, 158 Bleecker Street, near Thompson Street, Greenwich Village ; (212) 505-3474, nutcrackerratedr.com; \$20-30.

‘**A RADIO CHRISTMAS CAROL**’ Dec. 17, 3 p.m., St. Charles Borromeo Church, 21

Sydney Place, Brooklyn Heights; (718) 624-3614, theater2020.com; \$20 suggested donation.

'REID FARRINGTON'S A CHRISTMAS CAROL' Through Dec. 18, Abrons Arts Center, 466 Grand Street, Lower East Side; (212) 598-0400, henrystreet.org; \$20, \$10 for students.

'SNOW WHITE' Through Jan. 15, 303 Bond Theater, 303 Bond Street, Gowanus, Brooklyn; (800) 838-3006, companyxiv.com; \$30-35.

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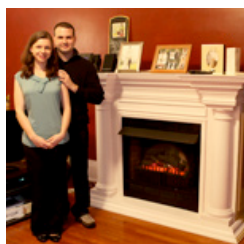
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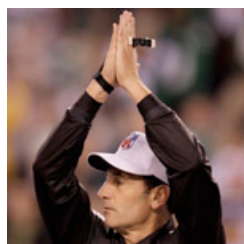


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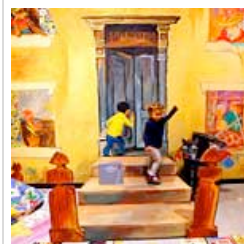
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