



Press Release

Date: 28 October 2020 Use: **IMMEDIATE**
GSC Honorary Patron **Brian Blessed OBE**

A CHRISTMAS CAROL By Charles Dickens

Adapted by Naylah Ahmed
Directed by Natasha Rickman

17-27 DECEMBER 2020

PENELOPE KEITH and **BRIAN BLESSED** to feature in a new online adaptation of Dickens' classic Christmas story adapted by **NAYLAH AHMED**, in co-production between the award-winning Guildford Shakespeare Company (GSC) and Jermyn Street Theatre (JST).

"Expect the first ghost when the bell tolls one..." so begins a Christmas Eve unlike any other; one that will change Ebenezer Scrooge's life forever... and a story that for over 170 years has joyously reminded us of the true meaning of Christmas.

This December, GSC have teamed up with Jermyn Street Theatre to bring Charles Dickens' thrilling story of compassion and redemption into audience homes in a special online adaptation by **NAYLAH AHMED**.

Following GSC's live virtual shows during lockdown (*The Wind in the Willows*, also with JST, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in co-production with Octagon Theatre, Bolton), this will be the theatre company's first Christmas show.

National treasures, **PENELOPE KEITH** and **BRIAN BLESSED** (also GSC's Honorary Patron) play the Ghosts of Christmas Past and Present. **JIM FINDLEY** (Donmar Warehouse, Regent's Park Open Air Theatre), who was appearing in JST's *The Tempest* when lockdown was announced in March, will play the legendary grouch Ebenezer Scrooge. Further casting to be announced. The show will also feature children from GSC's drama clubs as the Cratchit children.

This new adaptation has been especially commissioned by the two companies from **NAYLAH AHMED**. Naylah has worked extensively for BBC TV and Radio and is a core script writer for *The Archers*. It is directed by **NATASHA RICKMAN**, an Associate Artist of JST who earlier in 2020 directed *The Time Machine* for Creation Theatre at the London Library and its later virtual adaptation during lockdown.

Ghosts, time-travel, romance, and the biggest turkey in the shop (yes the one as big as you), wait in the snowy streets of Dickensian London; and who knows, you may be called up on to lend a hand in Scrooge's journey too! So, put away the humbugs and grab yourself a mince pie and mulled wine as GSC and JST take you on a festive feast of an adventure, all from the comfort of your own home.

MATT PINCHES, GSC Co-Founder: "We're so excited to be creating this special adaptation of Dickens' enchanting story. Its themes of compassion and community have never been more important, and this innovative production will light up the hearts of all who see it. We're indebted to the imagination of the whole artistic team for bringing this heart-warming tale to your living room, and to Penelope and Brian for granting us their time and talent."

TOM LITTLER, Artistic Director of Jermyn Street Theatre: "What a festive treat! A Christmas Carol is a wonderful way for families and friends to get together, wherever they may be, to share in the joy of a truly Christmassy story. Naylah and





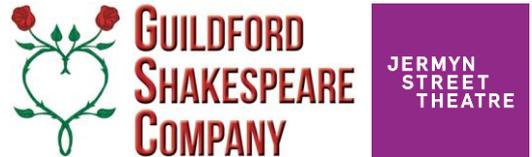
Press Release

Date: **28 October 2020** Use: **IMMEDIATE**
GSC Honorary Patron **Brian Blessed OBE**

Natasha are creating a brilliant adaptation that will be enjoyed as much by grandparents as by grandchildren. Put your feet up on your own sofa, pour a glass of something delicious, and take a break in Dickensian London."

ARTISTIC TEAM

Adapted by	Naylah Ahmed
Directed by	Natasha Rickman
Costumes by	Anett Black
Sound by	Matt Eaton
Virtual background and filming	Beth Mann
Producers	GSC & JST



TICKETS AND DATES

Thursday 17 December	7pm
Friday 18 December	7.30pm
Saturday 19 December	3pm & 7.30pm
Sunday 20 December	3pm & 7pm
Christmas Eve	3pm & 7pm
Boxing Day	7pm
Sunday 27 December	7pm

Tickets **£20 per device** (max two people per device).
Strictly limited availability.

Running Time **75 mins** (approx.)

General Booking	Tuesday 17 November, 10am
Priority Booking	Tuesday 10 November, 10am

Booking via **[GSC Box Office ONLY](#)**

www.guildford-shakespeare-company.co.uk/a-christmas-carol

Press Contact: Matt Pinches matt@guildford-shakespeare-company.co.uk 07971 234141



Note to Editors

Guildford Shakespeare Company is an award-winning, site-responsive theatre company. Established in 2006 by actor-managers Sarah Gobran and Matt Pinches, it has produced over 40 shows in unique venues including Guildford Cathedral, Watts Gallery, West Horsley Place and a Flemish Spiegeltent. In 2015, Brian Blessed OBE played the title role in *King Lear*. Its Education and Outreach works with over 5000 people young and old every year including free-to-access social inclusion programmes. GSC is one of the largest producers of home-grown theatre in the region.

Jermyn Street Theatre is the smallest producing theatre in central London. Established in 1994, it has transferred productions to the West End and Broadway, and coproduces with theatres across the UK and the world. Its work has won numerous Critic's Choice and OffWestEnd Awards. It is currently running the Brave New World Season of digital and remotely created work for isolated audiences.