

ARTS CLUB THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES DOLLY PARTON'S SMOKY MOUNTAIN CHRISTMAS CAROL TO LEAD OFF 2021–2022 SEASON IN NOVEMBER

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM ALSO ANNOUNCED FOR THIS SUMMER'S *BENEATH SPRINGHILL: THE MAURICE RUDDICK STORY*

VANCOUVER, B.C. (July 19, 2021)—Today, Arts Club Theatre Company **Artistic Director Ashlie Corcoran** and **Executive Director Peter Cathie White** announced the first production in the upcoming 2021–2022 season: *Dolly Parton's Smoky Mountain Christmas Carol*, a new musical adapted from *A Christmas Carol* and featuring music and lyrics by **Dolly Parton**.

The heartwarming musical will make its Canadian premiere at the Arts Club's flagship venue, the **Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage**, from **November 18, 2021, to January 2, 2022**. The rest of the lineup in the company's post-pandemic transitional season will be revealed next month.

Dolly Parton's Smoky Mountain Christmas Carol had its world premiere in 2019 in Boston. Broadwayworld.com described it as delivering on “the simplicity of its message of faith, family, and love, especially during the holiday season, and is a reflection of the heritage and values of its namesake.”

“When Peter [Cathie White] pointed out to me that this new musical was premiering, I started a long campaign to acquire the rights,” said Corcoran. “Dolly Parton is a uniquely talented and universally beloved icon across so many demographic ‘divides.’ As I learned more about how theatrical the storytelling is within this piece, and heard Dolly's music, I knew that it would be the right way to welcome back our audiences to the Stanley.”

Set during the 1930s in the Smoky Mountains of East Tennessee, this joyful musical imagines Ebenezer Scrooge as the owner of a mining company town, where his callous greed blinds him to the joys and gifts of the season. As a Christmas Eve snowstorm approaches, Scrooge is visited by his deceased business partner and three ghosts who compel him to see life and love anew. Dickens's classic characters and Parton's one-of-a-kind songwriting expertise are certain to make this a holiday event you'll want to share with friends and loved ones.

Dolly Parton's Smoky Mountain Christmas Carol

A New Holiday Musical Tradition

Based on *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens

Adapted by David H. Bell, Paul T. Couch & Curt Wollan

Book by David H. Bell

Music & Lyrics by Dolly Parton

Director Bobby Garcia

Musical Director Ken Cormier

Choreographer Julio Fuentes

November 18, 2021–January 2, 2022

Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage

This production of *Dolly Parton's Smoky Mountain Christmas Carol*, which features 13 actors and 6 musicians, will be helmed by **Bobby Garcia**, who is making his Arts Club directorial debut with this summer's *Beneath Springhill: The Maurice Ruddick Story*.

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Corcoran said, “I’m ecstatic that both shows will be directed by Bobby Garcia. Bobby is a Vancouverite, who usually spends the majority of his time in the Philippines, where he is the Artistic Director of Atlantis Productions. Because of COVID, Bobby is in Vancouver, and I’m grateful we will have his artistry and creativity on our stages.”

The Arts Club also announced the cast and creative team for *Beneath Springhill: The Maurice Ruddick Story*, created by **Beau Dixon** and inspired by a real-life event in Canadian history. Music and lyrics are by **Rob Fortin** and **Susan Newman**, and the show was originally directed and developed by **Linda Kash**. The show will run at the Arts Club’s Granville Island Stage **August 5–29** (media opening: Wed, August 11, at 8 PM).

Jeremiah Sparks, in his first role for the Arts Club, will inhabit the character of Maurice Ruddick and others. The creative team also includes **Dawn Pemberton**, Vocal Coach; **Steven Charles**, Guitar Coach; **Damon Bradley Jang**, Assistant Director; **Ted Roberts**, Set Designer; **Alaia Hamer**, Costume Designer; **Jeff Harrison**, Lighting Designer; **Malcolm Dow**, Sound Designer; **Caryn Fehr**, Stage Manager.

Corcoran added, “*Beneath Springhill* is a show I’ve programmed before, for a different organization, where it broke box office records. Based on a true story, Beau’s piece is a celebration of Ruddick’s hopefulness, joyful spirit, courage, and energy. Ruddick’s positivity—and his music—was a lifeline for himself and his colleagues. Our audience is hungry for live theatre and music, and I am so thrilled that they will experience both at the Granville Island Stage through this show.

This inspiring Canadian story told through song relates the life of Black Canadian “singing miner” Maurice Ruddick and the events of the 1958 Springhill, Nova Scotia, mining disaster that entrapped him and his fellow miners for nine harrowing days.

All performances will be presented in adherence to the most current safety guidelines established by the B.C. government. The health and safety of all patrons, staff, and artists is the Arts Club’s top priority.

IN BRIEF The Arts Club production of Beau Dixon’s [Beneath Springhill: The Maurice Ruddick Story](#) runs **August 5–29** at the [Granville Island Stage](#), 1585 Johnston Street, Vancouver. Performance schedule: Tue, 7:30 PM; Wed, 7:30 PM, Thu, 4 PM & 8 PM; Fri, 8 PM; Sat, 2 PM & 7:30 PM; Sun, 2 PM. Tickets from \$39 at [artsclub.com](#)

ABOUT THE ARTS CLUB

The Arts Club, one of the largest not-for-profit theatre companies in the country, is the principal gathering place for the theatrical arts in British Columbia. Comprising three unique venues across Vancouver, the Arts Club welcomes more than a quarter million guests annually, tours provincially and nationally, and engages students and artists alike through educational and professional programs.

Above all, the Arts Club is dedicated to the advancement of local artists telling stories from around the globe and, in particular, those of our region. From this, we believe that culture expands, an understanding of differences is nurtured, and art bursts forth. The Arts Club was founded in 1964 and is currently led by Artistic Director Ashlie Corcoran and Executive Director Peter Cathie White.

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MEDIA CONTACT

Arts Club Theatre Company
publicity@artsclub.com

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