



The first time we saw Gerald Dickens perform *A Christmas Carol*, we knew we had seen something very special. There are so many movie and TV versions of the story that it is hard to find a person who is not familiar with Ebenezer Scrooge. But Gerald's version was new and unique.

A Christmas Carol means a great deal to everyone at Byers' Choice. When Joyce Byers, my mother, first made Carolers, they were fashioned after a Dickensian Christmas that harkened back to London street scenes filled with song, music, and good cheer. In fact, Scrooge was one of the very first special pieces, which we produced, in the early 1980s.

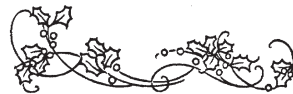
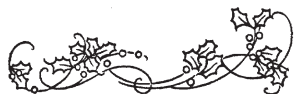
But more than the setting, the story captures the essence of what we believe in as a company. Ebenezer's declaration, "I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year" constantly guides us. The message to celebrate Christmas, to bring good cheer, and help others is just as important today; Charles Dickens could not have said it better.

Every time that I see Gerald bring the Carol's characters to life, it renews my faith in the Christmas Spirit in a way that nothing else can. Sometimes I think that he uncovered secret notes from his great-great grandfather's readings, but the real power of the performance really comes from his belief in the story.

We are so happy to be part of this production, and we hope that the performance helps you to keep the Christmas Spirit alive all the yearlong.

God Bless you everyone!

Bob Byers, President
Byers' Choice Ltd.



Presented by Byers' Choice® Ltd.

Welcomes
Gerald Charles Dickens
Presenting his Great-great grandfather's





Dickens on Dickens

Welcome to

for our presentation of
Gerald Charles Dickens and his
performance of "A Christmas Carol."
We hope you enjoy the performance
and that its message of positive change
and helping our fellow man will
carry through this Christmas season
into the New Year ahead.



All still photography, audio and video recordings
are strictly prohibited during the performance.
Thank you.



I have now been performing *A Christmas Carol* for over twenty years and it still energizes, excites and amazes me just as much as it ever did.

During that time I have not only learned a great deal about the story itself but also about the life, times, and character of Charles Dickens. Perhaps more importantly, I have learned about myself.

There are many messages contained within *A Christmas Carol* and they all come back to the simple premise that it is never too late to change and that we all have the power to spread goodness within our own circles. After all, if Ebenezer Scrooge can do it, then we can!

Charles Dickens was a remarkable man with a seemingly endless energy. Of course it is a privilege to carry his name but it is also a joy to have him as my script writer, no actor could ask for more. He writes narrative and direction in the same sentence; for instance, what performer could go wrong with: 'In came Mrs Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile?'

I spend most of my professional life performing various Dickens works, including *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Great Expectations*, *Doctor Marigold*, *The Signalman*, *American Notes*, *Sikes and Nancy* and many others. Not only do I perform on stage but also in the recording studio, creating audio books of his novels and recently I have made my first DVD of *Doctor Marigold*. It is extraordinary that Charles's talents extend so effortlessly to, and work so well in, mediums not even invented in his day.

The issues that Charles Dickens cared about and highlighted are sadly just as important today as they were when he wrote of them. He was a champion of the poor and under-privileged. The lessons that he taught must never be forgotten. Given what *A Christmas Carol* meant to Charles Dickens, what it means to my family and to me, I am honoured to be performing it for you today. Thank you so much for being here and for being part of the Charles Dickens legacy!"

