A.C.T.’s A CHRISTMAS CAROL 2022
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

My child would love to be in A Christmas Carol, but we have a family trip planned during the rehearsal period. Would it be possible to work around this or any other prior conflict? Should my child still audition?

We cannot commit to accommodating any conflicts for the rehearsal or performance period. Your child should audition only if you are willing to adjust or cancel conflicting plans as necessary.

What are your policies regarding COVID-19?

A.C.T. follows all local and state guidance for mitigating risk for COVID-19 in addition to following guidelines set by the unions represented by the production of A Christmas Carol. All actors in A Christmas Carol will be required to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19. The current plan is for everyone in rehearsals to be masked at all times except when actively rehearsing and performing. Space outside the rehearsal room will be provided for eating. Additionally, everyone participating in rehearsals may be asked to take A.C.T. provided COVID-19 tests as a measure for preventing the spread of the virus. This plan may shift prior to the first day of rehearsal, but a formal policy will be provided in advance of the first day anyone reports onsite. With any questions about these policies, please contact General Manager, Amy Dalba: adalba@act-sf.org.

Does my child need to enroll in a Young Conservatory class to audition? Since rehearsals don’t start until a couple of months after auditions take place, will my child be able to attend the class they signed up for in the meantime?

Young actors auditioning for A Christmas Carol do not need to be enrolled in a class in A.C.T.’s Young Conservatory to be eligible for auditions. Due to the time commitment of A Christmas Carol, it will not be possible for your child to participate in a Young Conservatory Fall Session course starting with first rehearsal. All young actors who are cast in the production will be enrolled in a tuition free course called Professional Performance Seminar.

The casting announcement mentions that actors between the ages of 8 and 13 are eligible to be in A Christmas Carol. My child turns 14 during the rehearsal/performance process. Can they still audition?

Following regulations from the Actors’ Equity Association, actors cast in A Christmas Carol must be between the ages of 8 and 13 for the entirety of all rehearsals and performances (born between December 25, 2008 and October 25, 2014). If your child is 14 or older, or if they will turn 14 during the rehearsal/performance process (before December 24, 2022), they
should not audition.

**What material should my child prepare for auditions?**

Each young actor should prepare one minute of memorized text or monologue (preferably from a play, but it’s also acceptable to take it from a favorite story) and a short song to be sung unaccompanied. The total time of prepared materials should not exceed two minutes. Please also bring your child’s proof of COVID-19 vaccination to the audition.

**How long will auditions take?**

We ask that each actor arrive 15 minutes before their scheduled audition window to check in, make a name tag, and receive additional information. Each actor will be in the audition room for approximately five minutes. Parents are not allowed in the audition room, but are welcome to stay in the waiting room while their child auditions. (Due to COVID-19 we ask that only one parent plans to be in the waiting room and, if possible, no siblings. This is to allow for as much social distancing as possible. We also ask that you remain masked while in the waiting room). Parents and actors should plan to spend up to 60 minutes in total at auditions, but may be released early.

**How do I find out if my child is called back?**

After all preliminary auditions have finished, you will receive an email with whether your young actor is invited to callbacks and all needed materials.

**What should we expect at callbacks? How long will callbacks take?**

Callbacks are scheduled on Friday, September 9, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., and actors should expect to be there the whole time. As with preliminary auditions, actors should plan to arrive 15 minutes early to check in. Actors are not automatically released after they have auditioned for all the roles for which they were called back—occasionally, the director will want to see actors a second time, or will ask them to read for additional roles. The audition monitor will make an announcement if actors can be released before 8 p.m.

Callbacks consist of acting and/or singing and/or dancing. Some (but not all) actors will be asked to read from the script. Some (but not all) actors will learn a short dance. All actors will participate in a group singing audition. Actors who are asked to read from the script will be sent pages to review in advance of callbacks. Actors do not need to prepare anything for singing or dance auditions.

A waiting room is provided for young actors when they are not in the audition room, and for their parents. Due to COVID-19 we ask that young actors refrain from eating in the waiting room, but drinks are allowed. Please remind your child to remain masked when not actively
drinking or actively auditioning. Parents are welcome, but not obligated, to stay for the duration of callbacks. An audition monitor will be provided to supervise any young actors who are not accompanied by their parents. Parents who opt not to stay for callbacks should be reachable via phone and available to pick up their child in the event of an early release.

**My child has been in a prior production of *A Christmas Carol* at A.C.T. Do they still need to come to preliminary auditions, or can they come directly to callbacks?**

Potentially. Some returning actors may be invited directly to callbacks. The director may request that other returning actors come to preliminary auditions, as young actors can grow and change significantly since the last production of *A Christmas Carol*. Preliminary auditions help the director assess for which roles young actors may be best suited.

**My child wasn’t cast in this year’s production. What is the best way to get feedback about their audition? Is it appropriate to contact the creative team about this?**

There are many factors involved in putting together the ensemble for the show, and the casting decisions are difficult to make. If a young actor is not selected, it by no means indicates that they aren’t talented or that they gave an inadequate audition. Due to time constraints, the creative team is not able to give feedback to parents or young actors. Young actors who are not cast in *A Christmas Carol* may enroll in a class in A.C.T.’s Young Conservatory, where they will work with an instructor to grow their craft. The classroom is the best place for feedback.

**What is the Professional Performance Seminar?**

The Professional Performance Seminar is a tuition-free course that all Young Conservatory students are automatically enrolled in upon final casting. Participating in A.C.T.’s *Christmas Carol* is an educational experience for young actors, and the Professional Performance Seminar course provides a framework for the experience. It consists of support and mentorship within the process and does not require hours outside of the rehearsal and performance calendar.

**I heard that A.C.T. will provide a letter for my child’s school about missing class time for rehearsals. How does this work? Do I need to get that from A.C.T., or will the theater contact my child’s school directly?**

After *A Christmas Carol* is fully cast, the Director of the Young Conservatory will send a letter to each cast member that will include a separate letter addressed to the head of school outlining the specific time commitments for *A Christmas Carol*. Families are responsible for delivering the letter and ensuring that cast member’s schools and teachers are aware of any school conflicts and will work with your child to make accommodations.
I’ve heard that A.C.T. is a union theater. Will being in A Christmas Carol count toward my child joining Actors’ Equity Association (the labor union representing American Actors and Stage Managers in the theater)?

Young actors cast in *A Christmas Carol* are registered as non-professionals with the Actors’ Equity Association under the “local jobber/student/child” category, as they are under the age of 14 and these roles are unpaid and are considered part of Young Conservatory training at A.C.T. Young actors in *A Christmas Carol* are not on an Equity contract and are not required to join the union, nor do they accrue workweeks toward membership.

I’m trying to plan ahead for the rehearsal period. When will I know which days my child will be required to attend rehearsal? Should I schedule other obligations now with the expectation that the *Christmas Carol* team can work around my child’s conflicts?

Young actors are assumed to be available for every rehearsal and performance listed on the preliminary rehearsal and performance schedule, which is distributed at auditions. Detailed rehearsal schedules that include specific call times are distributed by stage management the day before each rehearsal. Any conflicts that arise after the audition process must be approved by stage management. Please note: stage management will not be available to be in touch with parents until the week before rehearsals begin, and staff in the Young Conservatory and/or on the casting team are unable to advise or approve potential conflicts. Any outside obligations that are scheduled before stage management is available to approve them are assumed to be flexible, and may need to be adjusted or cancelled as necessary.

When/where will rehearsals take place?

Rehearsals will take place at 30 Grant Avenue through Saturday, November 19. Rehearsals will be held on weekday afternoons and evenings and on weekend mornings and afternoons. Mondays and Tuesdays will be the regularly scheduled day off during rehearsals and then Mondays are the day off during tech rehearsals and performances. Thanksgiving Day also will be a day off. Rehearsals then move to A.C.T.’s Geary Theater. Once rehearsals have moved into the theater, there will be some additional late morning hours on the weekdays as well as regular afternoon and evening hours from Monday, November 21 until *A Christmas Carol* opens on Wednesday, December 7. After the show opens, participants perform seven or eight shows per week through December 24. If a student is assigned to understudy another actor in the show, they will be required to attend all understudy rehearsals.

Are parents allowed in the rehearsal hall?

Parents are not allowed in the rehearsal hall. In compliance with California State Law, the Young Conservatory employs a performance monitor to supervise the young actors during all
rehearsals and performances.

**Does A.C.T. provide any assistance with transportation to/from rehearsal and/or a transportation subsidy?**

A.C.T. does not provide transportation or a transportation subsidy for young actors. Parents will receive a detailed contact sheet, complete with addresses, so that they can arrange carpools with other cast members who live nearby, if desired. Parents will also have the opportunity to purchase a discounted monthly parking pass for the Mason O'Farrell Garage near The Geary Theater.

**Is there a special family rate for *A Christmas Carol* tickets? Who should I contact about this?**

Families of young actors cast in *A Christmas Carol* are allowed eight complimentary tickets for the run of the show, plus two additional complimentary tickets that can only be used on opening night. (The opening night tickets are forfeited if they are not used on opening; they cannot be “rolled over” and added to a family’s other complimentary tickets.) After a family has used their allotment of complimentary tickets, there is no discounted rate for ticket purchases. Information about reserving your complimentary tickets and purchasing additional tickets will be emailed to you in early October. If you have any questions before you receive this information, please contact Ticket Services Representative Elizabeth Halperin at ehalperin@act-sf.org.