



PLAID TIDINGS

**A SPECIAL HOLIDAY EDITION OF
FOREVER PLAID**



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Play review: "Tidings" a tidy (if slight) holiday treat

BY JAMES HEBERT

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2010 AT 7:46 P.M.

If there's one tiding that rises above all others in "Plaid Tidings" (and if a "tiding" is even really a thing), it's the goofy exuberance the show's central quartet brings to this slight but defiantly likable holiday comedy.

That's especially true considering these guys are dead. "Tidings," which just opened in the Old Globe's arena-style White Theatre, is a spinoff from the original "Forever Plaid" story of a squeaky-



clean [singing](#) group dispatched to the Great Beyond via a traffic crash with a busload of Beatles enthusiasts. (No Fab Four fans were harmed in the making of this fable.)

NELVIN C. CEPEDA

"PLAID TIDINGS" Leo Daignault, Michael Winther, Jason Heil and David Brannen.

As with the first show, "Tidings" has the boys returning to Earth — wearing only the fab-est plaid — for one last hurrah and a whole lot of harmonizing.

Creator, writer and director Stuart Ross — who first brought the soon-to-be-huge "Forever Plaid" to the Globe some 20 years ago — returns bearing significant gifts, including four [actors](#) who seem right in tune with the characters' gently self-satirical wholesomeness.

Jason Heil, a wide-ranging local director-actor, has a winning Globe debut as the shambling Smudge, whose awkwardness is truly terminal; Michael Winther, a Broadway veteran, is smoothly amusing as the peacemaker and wannabe swinger Frankie; David Brannen, another locally based performer, gets laughs as the prickly jokester Sparky; and Leo Daignault (who, like Brannen, is a former Grinch in the Globe's other holiday show) charms and disarms as the jittery Jinx.

Those personalities don't always seem quite so distinct as they could, an aspect of the show that may sharpen as the run continues. But the actors' vocal harmonies (using graceful, bracing arrangements co-created by the late James Raitt, a cousin of singer Bonnie) are sugarplum sweet to the ear.

The cast also is backed by the deft musicianship of pianist Steven Withers and bassist Tim Christensen, performing the show's jazz-centric mix of gleefully skewed Christmas-carol medleys and non-holiday standards.

The alleged hip-hop number "TWUZ THa NITE B4 XMAS" sounds more like blues-funk, but offers some of Ross' wittier choreography. The show also gets comic mileage from "Heart and Snow" (a mashup of "Heart and Soul" and "Let It Snow"), and finds its own heart in a joyously corny number that puts the boys inside Perry Como's TV Christmas special, with clever use of Sean Fanning's sets and Chris Luessmann's projections.

On opening night, the show took its time gaining momentum (the blend of holiday material and existing set pieces from "Forever Plaid" can be ungainly), and the sound mix was troubled by some early bouts of static.

But there was plenty of plaidness (credit Deb Stein's crisscrossed costumes), and — for those predisposed to this show's knowing sense of holiday hokum — a tidings or two of gladness.

jim.hebert@uniontrib.com • (619) 293-2040 • Twitter @jimhebert

THEATER REVIEW

'PLAID TIDINGS' BRINGS PLENTY OF GLADNESS

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

If there's one tidings that rises above all others in "Plaid Tidings" (and if a "tidings" is even really a thing), it's the goofy exuberance the show's central quartet brings to this slight, but defiantly likable, holiday comedy.

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"Plaid Tidings"

Old Globe Theatre

When: Tuesdays-Fridays, 7 p.m.; Saturdays-Sundays, 2 and 7 p.m., through Dec. 26 (dark Christmas Day)

Where: White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

Tickets: \$35-\$67

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Online: theoldglobe.org

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(619) 293-2040
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THEATER REVIEW: Globe's 'Plaid Tidings' is light, entertaining holiday fare

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THEATER REVIEW: Globe's 'Plaid Tidings' is light, entertaining holiday fare

By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com North County Times - Californian | Posted: Wednesday, December 8, 2010 9:43 am | No Comments
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[Buy this photo](#) Michael Winther, Leo Daignault, Jason Heil and David Brannen in Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid, at The Old Glob through Dec. 26, 2010. Photo by Henry DiRocco.

One of the reasons Stuart Ross' "Forever Plaid" has been such a favorite on the semi-pro and community theater circuit over the past 20 years is that it's pretty easy to produce ---- all you need is four good musical theater/comedy actors who can harmonize, some plaid tuxedos and a few props to make the magic happen.

The Old Globe Theatre was one of the first regional theaters to discover that formula in 1991, and this winter the show has returned to the Globe in a "Special Holiday Edition" known as "Plaid Tidings." While the Globe production of this feather-light holiday show is far glitzier than any I've seen before ---- with elaborate graphics and a high-tech set ---- the appeal of the show still comes down to its simplest elements: four guys, four tuxes and some props.

The Globe's "Plaid Tidings" cast is very good, and most have done "Plaid" shows so many times they could do the moves and music in their sleep, but that's one of my quibbles with the show. I always thought of the Plaids as being young men in their early 20s, yet most of the actors cast in this show don't look like they've seen the underside of 30 in a while. Ross has written a joke into the "Plaid Tidings" script that implies that people continue aging after death, but the boyish goofiness of the characters still seems a bit off for the maturity of the quartet onstage.

Using the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" adage, Ross has recycled a great deal of "Forever Plaid" into "Plaid Tidings," including the same intro, a lightning-fast "Ed Sullivan Show" tribute, an encounter with Perry Como, an audience interactive musical segment, a dance number with long-necked plungers, a calypso scene, awkward choreography and many more lines and comic bits that worked well the first time around. The score, however, is mostly different, with a good number of popular holiday classics.

In "Forever Plaid," we first met the members of Forever Plaid, a nerdy, behind-the-times men's harmony quartet on the eve of their big debut, who were killed on Feb. 9, 1964, in a collision with a school bus (carrying Catholic teens to the Beatles debut on the "Ed Sullivan Show"). But thanks to an astral alignment, they are resurrected to perform the show they never got to perform in life.

As "Plaid Tidings" opens, the four Plaids ---- energetic Sparky, asthmatic heartthrob Frankie, nosebleed-prone Jinx and dyslexic/dyspeptic Smudge ---- find themselves once again in a nightclub before a live audience, and once again they're not sure why. We all know that they've been brought back to perform their long-dreamed-of televised Christmas special, but it takes the Plaids quite a while to figure this out for themselves (with a little angelic help from the late Rosemary Clooney).

In the meantime, they entertain with beautifully harmonized songs. The show opener, "Stranger in Paradise," is especially ear-pleasing). After

intermission, the Plaids perform their TV Christmas special and then glide back into the cosmos on a perfectly harmonized top note. Some of the funniest elements of the show include a brief appearance by Alvin and the Chipmunks, a holiday rap song (which the Plaids perform to their own amazement, as if by manipulation from heavenly puppeteers), and "Cool Yule," which features the Plaids' idea of late '50s hip choreography stolen from "West Side Story." Frankie philosophizes on the heartless victimization of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. Smudge shares his childhood holiday memories, and there's a bell choir segment that involves a member of the audience.

The foursome are all excellent singers and good actors, who know how to work intimately with the up-close audience in the White theater. As Sparky, David Brannen has the sweetest singing voice and the most vulnerability. As Jinx, Leo Daignault has a nice breakout moment in "Besame Mucho." Michael Winther, as Frankie, shines in his deadpan "Rudolph" soliloquy. And local actor Jason Heil makes his Globe debut in a sweet, subtle performance as Smudge.

Ross directs and musically stages the production, with smart and clever arrangements by James Raitt, Brad Ellis, Raymond Berg and David Snyder. Musical direction is provided by Don LeMaster with live accompaniment by pianist Steven Withers and bassist Tom Christensen. The musical runs two hours, 15 minutes, with intermission.

"Plaid Tidings: A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid"

When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays-Sundays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; through Dec. 26

Where: Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, The Old Globe, Balboa Park, San Diego

Tickets start at \$35

Info: 619-234-5623

Web: theoldglobe.org

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THEATER REVIEW

Globe’s ‘Plaid Tidings’ is light, entertaining holiday fare

BY PAM KRAGEN
pkragen@nctimes.com

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Michael Winther, left, Leo Daignault, Jason Heil and David Brannen in the Old Globe’s “Plaid Tidings.” Photo courtesy of Henry DiRocco

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See ‘Plaid,’ 22

‘Plaid’

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PLAID TIDINGS at the White

*They're back with holiday fun***by Don Braunagel**

Posted on Sat, Dec 4th, 2010

Last updated Sat, Dec 4th, 2010

Plaid Tidings, the fun musical newly opened in the Old Globe's White Theatre, is a likely prospect for an annual holiday attraction to pair with *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, running next door on the Globe stage.

Tidings, with its small cast and low cost, is a clever follow-up to *Forever Plaid*, which is unquestionably a San Diego favorite. The Globe's 1991 production was one of the theater's most popular, and a later offering at the former Theatre at Old Town became the longest-running local musical at that time, even developing a cult following.

Its little story concerned the Plaids, a '50s-60s harmony quartet killed in a road accident on their way to their first important gig but allowed to return to Earth to do that concert. Their rendering of that era's tunes struck a note of nostalgia and undoubtedly stirred audiences to ponder "what if" in their own lives.



Clockwise from top left:

Leo Daignault, Michael Winther David Brannen, Jason Heil

Photo by Henry DiRocco

This *Tidings* is a revision of the holiday sequel by creator-director Stuart Ross, who came in to tackle the challenge of doing the show in the round for the first time. The arena staging generally works well and even provides some gags — as when the Plaids, checking to make sure their flies are closed, turn their backs, then realize they're facing another part of the crowd.

Ross also moves the action up and down the aisles, with lots of joking and interplay with the audience, including a "volunteer" bell-ringer. There's even an "interruption" by a cell phone, which is a fascinating device to the back-from-afterlife Plaids.

The Plaids' re-return to the living is explained with some metaphysical mumbo-jumbo, summed up as "to restore harmonic balance" by doing their dreamed-of TV holiday special. The story, of course, matters little, although it does provide a moment of poignancy when they recall that, in childhood, TV holiday specials brought some warm normality to their lives dealing with separated parents.

But any seriousness is rare. Mostly, the quartet romps through Christmas songs, usually as medleys and often blended with ethnic favorites, as in the sing-along "Matilda take me money and go Christmas shopping." Ecumenically, too, they work in mentions of Hanukkah and Kwanzaa.

The four — David Brannen (Sparky), Leo Daignault (Jinx), Jason Heil (Smudge) and Michael Winther (Frankie) — vocalize pleasantly, together and separately. And they're adept at the campy, varied choreography (apparently by Ross), including tap and a takeoff on the sidewalk scene in "Singing in the Rain."

They toss in bits from the original — Jinx's nosebleeds, Smudge's nervousness, the use of plumber's helpers as mics — but anyone who missed that show can fully enjoy this one.

A second-act tribute to Perry Como slows the pace somewhat but finishes with a flourish: The guys do their arrangements of the backup for a couple of his hit songs — for instance, *bum ba ba bum*. Then, for good measure and hilarity, they include their famous three-minute version of TV's Ed Sullivan variety show. It's a hoot for those in the audience of a certain age (the majority), but may lose its luster as younger attendance grows.

Probably that's why they do a "Night Before Christmas" that morphs into a hip-hop number. Nice try, but I doubt it will remain forever with the Plaids.

Deb Stein's costume design — surprise, surprise — features plaids, in first-act blazers and second-act pants and ties. Sean Fanning's basically bare set has pits on both sides — one for the piano and bass accompanists, the other for various skits — and a handy pop-up fireplace. Chris Rynne's lighting, Paul Peterson's sound and Don LeMaster's music direction cheerily serve the proceedings.

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Dates Dec 3 at 4pm, Dec 4 at 1 & 5p, Dec 5 at 2 & 7p, Tue-Fri at 7p (Dec 23 also at 2p), Sat & Sun at 2 & 7p, thru Dec 26

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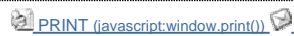
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Photo Ken Howard

Curtain Calls

By Charlene Baldrige
Week ending December 9

PLAID again, forever and differently

THE SHOW: Stuart Ross' 2002 *Plaid Tidings*, a Special Holiday Edition of *Forever Plaid*, directed by Ross at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Old Globe, though December 26.

THE STORY: The lads aren't young any more. And neither are we. Originally their lives were cut short when they intersected with a busload of schoolgirls on their way to hear the Beatles on the "Ed Sullivan Show." In *Forever Plaid* they return to earth, allowed to sing the show they never got to sing in life. In *Plaid Tidings* the four Plaids breach the cosmic curtain, finding themselves once again at San Diego's Old Globe. Feels like home, but the audience is older, too. They proceed to sing the old favorite Plaid numbers, do their 90 second "Ed Sullivan" bit, interact with the audience, and win hearts galore with their intentionally inept, imperfectly choreographed body moves, redolent of times when such guy groups were rife, before the Beatles changed everything. Their deaths symbolize the end of four-part harmonic innocence. Their "second coming" in *Plaid Tidings* gives them a chance to perform their Christmas show.



Michael Winther, Leo Daignault, Jason Heil and David Brannen Photo: Henry DiRocco

THE PERFORMERS: High tenor **Leo Daignault**, a veteran Old Globe Grinch, who also created the role of Jinx in the Pasadena premiere of *Plaid Tidings*, returns to portray Jinx, prone to nosebleeds. **Jason Heil**, who might

be called San Diego's resident musical theatre baritone, makes his Old Globe debut as the intellectual Smudge, who is terrified of "soporificizing" the audience. Heil's terpsichorean performance is hilariously death defying, and although his voice sounded a bit tired Sunday evening, December 5, he provides a lot of ballast. Lead tenor **Michael Winther** returns to perform the role of Frankie. Winther previously appeared at the Globe in *Forever Plaid*, *King Lear* and *Damn Yankees*. Well-known San Diego actor **David Brannen**, also a veteran Grinch ('03-'04), portrays Sparky. When pianist **Steve Withers** goes on a "smoke break" in the second act, Brannen fills in at the piano. The conspiracy of four allows the audience to feel "comforted, warm and runny inside," which is just what Ross intends.

THE PRODUCTION: Vocal and musical arrangements are by the late great **James Raitt**, and **Brad Ellis**, **Raymond Berg** and **David Snyder**, with musical continuity and supervision by Snyder. **Don LeMaster** is music director and **Ross** also does the musical staging. **Sean Fanning's** scenic design starts out totally smooth and unfussy, just four mikes, a pit for the baby grand and bass (**Tim Christensen**) and a few benches. By the time the holidays fully arrive, there are festive wreaths, mistletoe, a Christmas tree, menorahs, and adorable Plaid holiday attire (**Deb Stein**). Sound is by **Paul Peterson**, who does what he can, no doubt, with balance. **Chris Rynne** provides lighting.



Jason Heil makes his Old Globe debut as Smudge Photo: Henry DiRocco

Lots of favorite skits and audience participation segments survive to be repeated. New ones include Plaid wonderment over the invention called a cell phone. Ross has a wickedly funny wit. Really, it's a good, undemanding time in the theatre.

THE LOCATION: Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre at the Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, 7 pm Tuesday-Sunday, with matinees at 2 pm Saturday-Sunday, www.theoldglobe.org or (619) 23-GLOBE.

BOTTOM LINE: Worth a try

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Plaid Tidings

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"A Plaid's gotta do what a Plaid's gotta do." In this case, come back to life during the holidays and figure out why they've come back. Okay, the frame tale isn't much, but performances by Leo Daignault, David Brannen, Michael Winther, and especially Jason Heil (allowed to showcase his versatility) make for an always entertaining evening. And for a group of admittedly virginal males, who were "semi-pro" singers at best, the vocals and arrangements (often "hybrid" songs) are quite sophisticated.

Worth a try.**December 2 through December 26**

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SAN DIEGO

Regional Reviews by Bill Eadie

Plaid Tidings

Old Globe Theatre

Last holiday season, the new Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre at the Old Globe was finished, but its opening show wasn't due until January. So, Old Globe Executive Producer Louis G. Spisto persuaded Associate Artist Patrick Page and his spouse, Paige Davis, to appear in a limited run of the musical *I Do! I Do!*. The show sold well, and so Mr. Spisto has decided to try again, this time with *Plaid Tidings*, Stuart Ross' holiday version of his hit show, *Forever Plaid*.

The Old Globe has a history with *Forever Plaid*, having sponsored two sold-out runs of the show, and it still had the costumes on hand. So, the move looked like a nice adult alternative to the perennial *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, which was running next door. Stuart Ross even consented to direct the show.

So far so good, yes? Well, maybe not.

The set up is an easy variation on the original. A guy group that has been killed in an automobile accident with a bus carrying kids to see "The Ed Sullivan Show" in New York gets an opportunity to return to the living to do one last show. Only, in this version that one last show is taking place during the holidays, so holiday music has to be a part of it. The four Plaids (played by Leo Dagnault, Jason Heil, David Brannen and Michael Winther) even (in their dreams) get to appear on the "Ed Sullivan Show" instead of the local Knights of Columbus hall.

The mushy silliness of the plot is tolerable if the audience is treated to great guy group singing. Unfortunately, this production features only adequate guy group singing. The performers are actors who sing, rather than singers who can play a part, so the singing sounds like four distinct voices instead of one tight quartet. There's a lot of sliding around and up to the pitch (which works ok in theater singing but not in choral style), and attacks and cut offs are sloppy. Lay the blame at the feet of music director Don LeMaster, a veteran of many local musical theatre productions. Associate Music Director Steven Withers on piano and bassist Tim Christensen do their best from the pit to keep things on track.

The rest of the production is fine, and the White Theatre once again proves itself as a good place to watch intimate musicals, despite its cramped seating. Globe regulars Sean Fanning (Scenic Design), Chris Rynne (Lighting Design) and Paul Peterson (Sound Design) make their work simple but effective, and Chris Luessmann's projection designs provide a welcome added dimension to the show's look and feel.

The kids are all next door at *Grinch*, but it does help your enjoyment if you've actually seen episodes of "The Ed Sullivan Show," as there's a lengthy segment that refers to most of that series' featured acts.

If *Plaid Tidings* doesn't satisfy completely on an artistic level, it does provide a certain degree of irresistible holiday cheer. Performances continue through December 26.

Through December 26 at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre on the Old Globe campus in San Diego's Balboa Park. Tickets (\$35-67) are available by phoning (619) 23-GLOBE



(from top) Jason Heil, Michael Winther, Leo Dagnault and David Brannen

[234-5623] or by visiting [The Old Globe's website](#).

The Old Globe presents, *Plaid Tidings: A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid*, by Stuart Ross with vocal and musical arrangements by James Raitt, Brad Ellis, Raymond Berg, and David Snyder, and musical continuity and supervision by Mr. Snyder. The original *Forever Plaid* musical arrangements were by Mr. Raitt. Directed and staged musically by Mr. Ross with scenic design by Sean Fanning, lighting design by Chris Rynne, sound design by Paul Peterson, and projection design by Chris Luessmann. Don LeMaster served as music director, Deb Stein designed the original costumes, Samantha Barrie, CSA, did the casting, and Elizabeth Stephens served as stage manager.

With Leo Daignault as Jinx, Jason Heil as Smudge, David Brannen as Sparky, and Michael Winther as Frankie.

Photo: Henry DiRocco


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'Forever Plaid' makes a comeback...from heaven



Jason Heil, Leo Daignault, David Brannen, Michael Winther (Photo: Henry DiRocco)

By Carol Davis



Carol Davis

SAN DIEGO – For the “Forever Plaids” their return to San Diego is a welcome sight. Just as a short trip down memory lane the musical *Forever Plaid* started at the Old Globe way back in 1991. The off- Broadway musical comedy, written by Stuart Ross hit New York in 1990 and became an instant success with follow up shows like *Plaid Tidings* and *The Sound of Plaid*; *Forever Plaid School Vision* (a version for high schools) and *Forever Plaid: The Movie*.

For San Diego historians, *Forever Plaid* was the longest running production (1996-2001) at the Theatre in Old Town then managed by Miracle Productions run by Jill K. Mesaros and Paula Kalustian. Since 2008 Cygnet Theatre Company is housed in the space. Artistic director Sean Murray is now producing and operating the theatre with more diversity, producing shows on a regular basis. Back in 1996 a trip to Old Town without seeing ‘The Plaids’ would be like having a picnic without ants.

Speaking of taking trips back, that’s the premise of Stuart’s “Plaids” musicals. Corny as it may seem, four high school friends Jinx, Smudge, Sparky and Frankie formed a little harmonizing group and practiced every day after school and work. They practiced in the basement of one of the guy’s dad’s businesses until they landed their first gig. (I’ll let them tell you about that)

While on their way to the gig they collided with a bus filled with a group of gals from a Catholic School who are on their way to see the Beatles make their debut on the Ed Sullivan Show.

None of the boys survived and all went to heaven or wherever it is that singing groups go in the hereafter. As fate would have it, they get one more chance come back to do the show ‘they never got to do in life’.

On this one foggy night the Plaids return to earth to get one more chance to fulfill their dream. This time however, (as opposed to the very first time) their return is around the holiday season and that’s how “Plaid Tidings” was born.

Enter Jinx (Leo Daignault), Smudge (Jason Heil), Sparky (David Brannen) and Frankie (Michael Winther) carrying a suitcase and lighting their way to the stage with a candle. They are still surprised to be back on earth and can’t get over their luck in being back on earth. WOW!

Keep in mind the accident happened in the 50’s when singing groups were all about, well singing groups like The Four Lads, The Four Aces, The Four Freshmen, The Drifters, The Lettermen and the list goes on. Television was all about The Ed Sullivan Show (They do a very clever fast track roundup of Sullivan favorite guests) and favorite crooner Perry Como’s ‘Dream along with me...’ was a password to great entertainment.

More than the corn of the story and how it all came to be (which is narrated and poked at throughout), the music is the heart of this show. If you are anything like yours truly, the music of the 50’s and 60’s is at the heart of my being. I love the music, the harmonizing, the schmaltz, and the fun of it, the everything. In fact, I could hum (very quietly) every one of the songs.

I don’t think over the years, since the original Old Town days that I’ve ever seen a bad “Plaids”. This production is no exception. The lads or Plaids currently performing at the Old Globe are in perfect harmony and they are just plain fun to watch as well.

Heil’s Smudge is as clumsy and nearsighted as ever especially without his specs. He’s also quite charming and his voice stretches wide ranges making him somewhat unique to the group. David Brennan, one of my favorite dancer friends is great as Sparky the trickster. Both are local actors who contribute much to our theatre community. Love, love, love both Daignault and Winther’s voices. All four harmonize beautifully. I could have listened all night.

It's difficult picking out favorites but what comes to the top are "Stranger in Paradise", "Mambo Italiano". "Matilda" (be prepared for audience participation), "Moments to Remember", "Hey There", "Mixmaster Christmas" and "Twaz Tha Nite Be4 Xams" (a hoot). All four have tons of showmanship under their belts and opening night was no exception.

The show sailed along at a nice pace. It looks exactly like every other Plaid show with direction and musical staging by Stuart Ross with one exception, this show is done in the round. At first I thought it might become a liability since some audience members would sometimes be looking at the performers backs but it turned out to be a non-issue. The seasoned group played well to north, east, south and west.

Chris Rhyne's lighting is perfect as is Paul Peterson's sound design. Chris Luessmann's projections enhance the storybook fable and the plaid costumes, originally designed by Deb Stein got a big boost from Charlotte Devaux, resident costume designer at the Globe. Don LeMaster's musical direction with Steven Withers on piano and Tim Christensen on bass all comes together for a night of musical entertainment is hard to pass up.

See you at the theatre.

Dates: November 26th - December 26th

Organization: Old Globe Theatre

Phone: 619-234-5623

Production Type: Musical

Where: Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way

Ticket Prices: \$35.00-\$67.00

Web: theoldglobe.org

Venue: Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre

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**Carol Davis**

"Plaid Tidings" a gift from heaven

December 5th, 2010 10:03 am PT

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Reduced Ed Sullivan Show with the Plaids at The old Globe
Photo: Henry DiRocco

Winther) carrying a suitcase and lighting their way to the stage with a candle. They are still surprised to be back on earth and can't get over their luck in being back on earth. WOW!

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See you at the theatre.

Dates: November 26th- December 26th

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THEATER REVIEW: "Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid" is irresistible

JEAN LOWERISON - SDGLN THEATER CRITIC

December 9th, 2010

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Remember those nerdy guys in high school who wheeled the A-V carts and liked to sing?

They're back.

Yes, I know – Forever Plaid is dead. But that's just part of their mystique.

You remember the story of the "semi-pro" quartet on the way to pick up their custom-made plaid tuxes for their first big gig. They were killed instantly when a bus full of teens on their way to the Beatles' U.S. debut on the Ed Sullivan show slammed into them broadside (the kids survived just fine).

But now, Forever Plaid has gotten a heavenly reprieve and they've returned to the Old Globe for "Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid," onstage through Dec. 26 at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre.

The Christmas show plot's a little goofy and the result a bit disjointed: Dropped on Earth for a reason they are not told, they spend a good part of the first act communing with songstress Rosemary Clooney from the Great Beyond (via notes dropped from above).

The note-dropping shtick quickly becomes tedious, but all is forgiven when they start to sing in that fab '50s close-harmony style, especially with the trademark wild arrangements that run from Christmas standards to pop songs – sometimes in the same breath.

This quartet consists of Michael Winther (singing Frankie, on lead), Leo Dagnault (Jinx, second tenor), David Brannen (Sparky, on baritone) and Jason Heil as bass Smudge.

Jinx still has nosebleeds, but Smudge is now the designated intellectual, opining that opening the show with a ballad has "a tendency to soporificize the audience" and noting "the Orwellian implications of 'he sees you when you're sleeping.'"

The song list is an eclectic combination of Christmas favorites and their old standards. The show includes a knockout parody from the previous Plaid incarnation: the Ed Sullivan show in 3 minutes, 11 seconds. Where else will you see the Vienna Boys' Choir morphing into the Rockettes, dish jugglers, Liberace, Jose Jimenez, Birgit Nilsson, the Singing Nun and the chipmunks in less than five minutes?

The Plaids have been packing them in for nearly two decades now and have inspired legions of Plaid Heads, fans who see each show multiple times, sometimes even following them from one gig to another.

There's something about that Four Freshmen/Hi-Lo's close harmony that people (myself included) like to hear. And when you can swing Christmas favorites with arrangements like those used by the Plaids, how can you resist?

ENLARGE



Photo credit: Henry DiRocco

From top: Jason Heil, Michael Winther, Leo Dagnault and David Brannen in "Plaid Tidings."



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Musical Theatre Review: Going 'Plaid' for the holidays

Posted by [admin](#) on 12/13/10 • Categorized as [Arts & Entertainment](#), [Theater](#)

By Charlene Baldrige | SDUN Arts Writer



(l to r) Jason Heil, Leo Daignault, David Brannen and Michael Winther in 'Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid,' plays at The Old Globe until Dec. 26, 2010. (Photo by Henry DiRocco)

As they say during the 90-minute musical show, "There's no place like 'Plaid' for the holidays." That statement, made in song by four close-harmony guys, is borne out as they bring about a bit of seasonal charm in "Plaid Tidings," the 2002 sequel to "Plaid" creator Stuart Ross's phenomenal hit, "Forever Plaid."

The four youthful characters, who so endeared themselves to theatergoers in the past, are allowed to return to earth a second time, not knowing why. They've been given another chance to achieve what they didn't in life—this time in a holiday show titled "Plaid Tidings," which plays locally through Dec. 26 at Balboa Park's Old Globe Theatre.

Landing amid lightning strikes, Jinx (Leo Dagnault), Smudge (Jason Heil), Sparky (David Brannen) and Frankie (Michael Winther) find themselves in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre at the Old Globe. One of the quartet says, "Look. We're back in San Diego, at the Old Globe. Is it my imagination or do they (audience members) look kinder?" Another replies, "No. Not kinder. Just older." Well, the "boys" are older, too, this time around, gently lending the show a feeling that though things have changed, we're still safe with these dear, funny men, all of whom are inept on purpose still upset the "harmonal" balance of the world, especially now that we are held hostage by awful holiday recordings.

As before, high tenor Jinx is inept with the microphone and prone to nosebleeds; Smudge, the bass, is a rather pompous word lover and blind as a bat without his glasses. To say that Dagnault, Heil, Brannen and Winther all sing like angels all the time and that the blend is always perfect would be hyperbole (I saw the evening show Sunday, Dec. 5, at the end of a long opening week); however, all do a superb job of establishing character and lightness and their specialty is still making onlookers feel "comforted, warm, and runny inside." Music director is Don LeMaster, with Steven Withers on piano and Tom Christensen on bass. Dagnault is the dance captain, with Heil turning in some amusing terpsichorean moves.

Favorite skits resurrected from "Forever Plaid" include the Perry Como segment and the quicksilver "Ed Sullivan Show" replete with Topo Gigio. Ross adds an extremely funny cell phone gag, with the guys running all over trying to discover the source of the (to us) familiar ring tone, then not knowing what a cell phone is.

Along the way to Plaid fulfillment, the audience sings along on "Matilda," and hears such numbers as "Kingston Market," "Moment's to Remember," "Kiss of Fire" and "Besame Mucho," while also enjoying beloved seasonal works such as "The Dreidel Song," "Joy to the World," and "I'll Be Home for Christmas." Departing audience members remarked to one another how much fun they'd had.

SIDE NOTES:

"Forever Plaid" made its Old Globe premiere in 1991. The show had been playing in New York supper clubs for a year when former managing director Tom Hall saw it and decided to produce it at the Old Globe Theatre. "Forever Plaid" was such a hit, Hall brought the show back the following year. Several years later it played an extended run at the Theatre in Old Town. "Plaid Tidings" premiered at Pasadena Playhouse in 2001.

"Plaid Tidings" continues at 7 p.m. Tuesdays through Sundays and 2 p.m. Saturdays through Sundays through Dec. 26, \$35-\$67, Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego, theoldglobe.org or (619) 23-GLOBE.

Tool Box:

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Going 'Plaid' for the holidays

By Charlene Baldridge
SDUN Arts Writer

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(l to r) Jason Heil, Leo Daignault, David Brannen and Michael Winther in 'Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid,' plays at The Old Globe until Dec. 26, 2010. (Photo by Henry DiRocco)

FROM PAGE 19

PLAID

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Side Notes

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Plaid Tidings

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The 1950s foursome (and eponymous 1990 musical) known as Forever Plaid, who've been entertaining audiences with their close-harmony vocals and amusing between-song patter for the past two decades, now make a Christmas season return to earth at San Diego's Old Globe Theatre in a holiday spin-off cleverly titled Plaid Tidings.

The brainchild of writer-director Stuart Ross, Forever Plaid are best friends Sparky (David Brannen), Jinx (Leo Daignault), Smudge (Jason Heil), and Frankie (Michael Winther), victims of a 1964 car crash (they collided with a busload of Catholic schoolgirls on their way to see the Beatles perform on the Ed Sullivan Show). In Forever Plaid, the foursome were granted permission to return to earth for one final show. Plaid Tidings allows them an encore performance.

Once you get past that rather morbid setup (one that continues to pop up in frequent reminders that the four are indeed dead, though fortunately the schoolgirls survived unscratched), Plaid Tidings proves a nostalgic, funny, tuneful two hours of Christmas cheer—with a few Greatest Hits from the original Forever Plaid thrown in for good measure.

Opening with their signature number "Stranger In Paradise," the quartet proceed to entertain us with "Sh-Boom (Life Could Be A Dream)," performed with 5-foot-long toilet plungers as microphones—because that's how they practiced it. Steve Allen's "Cool Yule" morphs into "Cool" from West Side Story (kudos to Ross for his Jerome Robbins-inspired musical staging). Other clever mash-ups include "Besame Mucho" + "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus" (makes sense) and "Angels We Have Heard On High" + Harry Belafonte's "The Banana Boat Song" ("In excelsis Day-O, Day-O, daylight comes and me wanna go home.") There's also Belafonte's "Matilda," with the seasonally tweaked audience-sing-along refrain "Hey! Matilda, Matilda, Matilda, she take me money and go Christmas shopping," and an international Christmas mini-medley including "Feliz Navidad," "Mele Kalikimaka," and even a few bars of "Draidl" for anyone of the Jewish faith who has happened to wander in.

In a hilarious contemporary twist, "The Night Before Christmas" becomes "TWUZ THA NITE B4 XMAS," performed boy band style with leader Frankie disbelieving the hip-hop moves his body can't resist gyrating to. The sensitive, All-American Frankie also gets to sing-act "Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer" as an a cappella solo performance-cum-therapy session when pianist Steven Withers takes a post-intermission break (he's the member of a very strong union, you see). "This song has always been upsetting," Frankie tells us. "When Rudolph saved the day, the reindeer shouted out with glee, but I say, too little too late!"

An audience volunteer (Jan at the performance reviewed here) helps Forever Plaid play the Christmas bells in a medley of "Carol Of The Bells" "Joy to the World" and "Mr. Santa," played to the tune of "Mr. Sandman."

Other Act Two highlights include the Plaids' dream of backing up Perry Como finally coming true on "I'll Be Home For Christmas," which has the foursome performing live to a black-and-white clip from one of Perry's many Christmas Specials. Making a return from the original Forever Plaid is "The Ed Sullivan Show (In Three Minutes)," which manages to compact José Jimenez, Señor Wences, Topo Gigio, The Vienna Boys Choir, The Rockettes, the Flying Walendas, Alvin And The Chipmunks, performing seals, acrobats, jugglers, plate spinners—and Smudge standing in very nicely for Ed himself—all in about three minutes.

Oh, and there's a even heavenly cell phone call from Rosemary Clooney, whom the boys salute with "Mambo Italiano" and "Hey There."

Ross's script can get a little corny (or a lot), as when one of the boys reveals his tip for staying young in the afterlife ("I use post mortem moisturizer. It gets rid of the dead skin."), but as long as Forever Plaid are singing, it's first-rate holiday entertainment, particularly for those in the audience old enough to remember the 1950s.



All four San Diego Plaids are seasoned regional theater vets, with Brannen, Dagnault, and Winther making return visits to the Old Globe. (Both Brannen and Dagnault have played the title role in *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*.) Each is a delight: Brannen as the asthmatic Frankie, Dagnault as nervous, nose-bleeding Jinx, Heil as the klutzy Smudge with the big bass voice, and Winther as wise guy Sparky. Each scores in solo moments, and together their vocals are (what else?) heavenly.

Director Ross deserves bonus points for meeting the challenges of staging this Plaid Tidings in the round, no small feat when you consider that the Plaids normally get to stand in a straight line facing the fourth wall, and here must pay equal attention to all four sides of the house. Thumbs up too to scenic designer Sean Fanning for adapting what is usually a proscenium set to an in-the-round format. Chris Rynne's lighting design, Paul Peterson's sound design, Chirs Luessmann's projection design, and Deb Stein's original costume design are all as good as it gets.

Music director Don LeMaster (and associate musical director Withers) merit highest marks for helping the Plaid Tidings cast sound as marvelous as they do, harmonizing to vocal and musical arrangements by James Raitt, Brad Ellis, Rayond Berg, and James Snyder, the latter of whom gets credit for musical continuity and supervision. Tim Christensen on bass joins pianist Withers in the Plaids' flawless musical accompaniment. Elizabeth Stephens is stage manager.

Plaid Tidings ends on a heartwarming note, with Frankie reminding his buddies that "When sad things happen, we all have the ability to create a little harmony," just before the Forever Plaid foursome conclude a terrific two hours of song and laughter with a memorable, "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas."

Only the Grinch could resist.

Old Globe Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego. Through December 26. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 7:00. Saturdays and Sundays at 2:00 and 7:00. No performances Christmas Day. Reservations: 619 234-5623 www.oldglobe.org

--Steven Stanley
December 5, 2010

Photos: Henry DiRocco

HAPPY
TIDINGS

A Special Holiday Edition of
Forever Plaid

EAST COUNTY
GAZETTE
CLASS ACT
DINING & ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE
SECTION B TO THE EAST COUNTY GAZETTE VOL. 11, NO. 27, DECEMBER 9, 2010

‘Plaid Tidings’ — a must see this season

by Diana Saenger

Many San Diegans fondly recall Stuart Ross’ *Forever Plaid* that played in Old Town and at the Globe. But if you think you’ve basically seen the show, *Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid* will prove you wrong.

This hilarious musical entertains from beginning to end. The Plaids – David Brannen (Globe’s *Grinch*, *Big River*, *A Chorus Line*) as Sparky; Leo Daignault (originated the role of Jinx in *Plaid Tidings*, *Avenue Q*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, *Forever Plaid*) as Jinx; Jason Heil (*Cabaret*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Zhivago*) as Smudge; and Michael Winther (*The Boys from Syracuse*, *Songs from an Unmade Bed*, *Damn Yankees*, *Forever Plaid*) as Frankie, are funny, have perfect timing and sing wonderfully.

Audiences are immediately drawn to the story about how a singing group of four teens lost their lives in a tragic accident. But then they get a heavenly phone call from the boys’ idol, Rosemary Clooney. She’s found a way for the boys to return to Earth and entertain fans.

From the first tune to the last, songs such as “Hey There,” “Fever,” “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas,” “The Dreidel Song,” “Bésame Mucho” and “Let It Snow” keep everyone in the audience humming along and laughing at the silly antics of the guys.

“*Plaid Tidings*, which has a cornucopia of holiday songs and other standards performed with that “Plaid” twist is simply perfect for the season,” said Louis G. Spisto, the Globe’s Executive Producer.

The *Tidings* design team includes Sean Fanning (Scenic Design), Charlotte Devaux (Costume Design), Chris Rynne (Lighting Design), Paul Peterson (Sound Design), Don LeMaster (Music Director), Steven Withers (Associate Music Director) and Liz Stephens (Stage Manager).

Writer, director Ross has thrown in a little of everything to connect to real life and fantasy as well. And since the show has sold out around the world, and he’s recently written a version for a glee club, he knows what works.

“This show is for everyone from parents taking their kids to preteens and seniors,” Ross said. “It’s also a perfect holiday date night. With all the different dance numbers and wide range of songs, it’s just a great mix of entertainment.”



Michael Winther, Leo Daignault, Jason Heil and David Brannen in *Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid*. Photo Credit: Henry DiRocco.



(From top) Jason Heil, Michael Winther, Leo Daignault and David Brannen in *Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid* Photo Credit: Henry DiRocco.

Theatre – To Go
Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid.
Now – Dec. 26,
The Old Globe’s Sheryl and Harvey
White Theatre
1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park
TICKETS: starts at \$35, (619) 23-GLOBE or
www.TheOldGlobe.org

THEATRE

PLAID TIDINGS

Through Dec 26
The Old Globe's
(White Theatre)
theoldglobe.org
(619) 234-5623
Tuesday through Friday, 7 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday, 2 and 7 p.m.

Michael Winther, Leo Daignault, Jason Heil and David Brannen in "Plaid Tidings: A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid" at The Old Globe. (Courtesy Henry DiRocco)



Wholesome 'Plaid Tidings' for earthly audiences, young and old

By Cuauhtémoc Kish | Theatre critic

The heavens parted in early December and allowed a harmonious four-part guy group to perform the show they never got to do in life, once again, in San Diego. The first time around their heavenly approved, "one-night gig" lasted for more than a year on Broadway. Following that impressive feat, "Forever Plaid" played for 19 weeks at the Old Globe Theatre (1991) before the show reopened at the Theatre in Old Town, playing for a mere six years.

This time around they retooled the show, giving it a holiday glow that will entertain San Diego audiences at the White Theatre in Balboa Park through Dec. 26. Creator, director and writer Stuart Ross has his harmonious quartet (Leo Daignault, Jason Heil, David Brannen and Michael Winther) do a little bit of everything (singing, dancing, gymnastics, piano playing) to make this seasonal celebration work its holiday magic on young and old alike. Backstory: The Plaids had finally landed their first really big gig at the Airport Hilton

cocktail lounge, when, out of nowhere, this harmonious quartet was broadsided by a school bus as they journeyed to pick up their custom-made plaid tuxedos and were, oh-so-sadly, killed and taken away to heaven, unable to complete their contract. Now, after some heavenly wrangling, they are allowed this second visit to do a holiday show. It's launched with "Stranger in Paradise," setting up the evening for light banter, warm and fuzzy reflections, and a solid four-part harmony (some 34 musical numbers are listed in the program).

Although the vast majority of songs have a holiday bent, there are some unexpected delights including "Bésame Mucho," "Fever" and "Sha-Boom" ("Life Could Be a Dream"). Still, old standards like "The Christmas Song," "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" and "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" ring out loud and clear. Sean Fanning's scenic design is a marvel of dark blue. He showcases the two very competent musicians (Steven Withers on Piano and Tim Christensen on Bass) in

see Plaid, pg 25

FROM PAGE 19
PLAID

the pit of the "in-the-round" stage. A few rather inconspicuous boxes are left on stage where the actors select props needed for the various numbers—anything from antlers to a nun's habit. The set literally melds from a miniature version introduced in the first act to the real thing, with all the whistles and bells, in the second act. Paul Peterson's sound design and Chris Luessmann's projection design complement the production with lightening cracks and even a televised visit by the iconic and sedate Perry Como. No surprises from costume designer, Deb Stein; it's plaid jackets and Perry Como sweaters. My particular favorites include the quartet's holiday

interpretation of "Day-O," a hodge-podge parody reconstruction of "The Ed Sullivan Show," and Winther's teary lament of "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." And local favorite Jason Heil's bungling about the stage—without missing a note—when he tosses off his glasses, becoming even more sight-challenged, is a classic. And there's the cheeky choreography complete with plungers. The list goes on and delightfully on. No doubt you will be cajoled into singing along to the show's version of "Matilda, Matilda," and you will not escape the evening's festivities without recalling fond memories of gay old times from the past. "Plaid Tidings" is the perfect holiday sequel to a show that provides dweeby humor, doo-wop harmonies and wholesome glad tidings to earthly audiences, young and old. 🎄

DESERT NEWS LOCAL WEEKLY

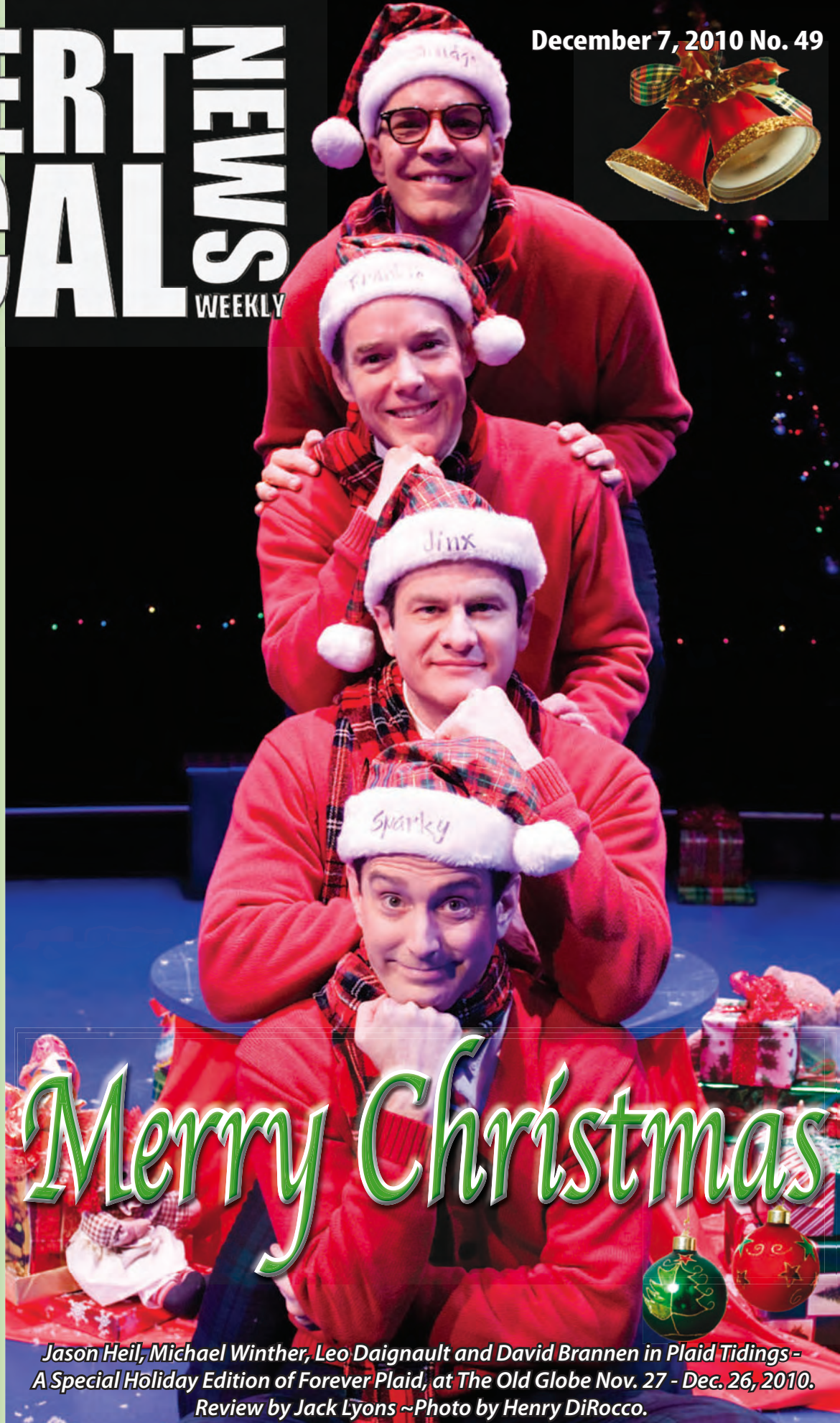
December 7, 2010 No. 49



Tree Lighting and
Downtown Festival



Plaid Tidings
Review by Jack Lyons



*Jason Heil, Michael Winther, Leo Dagnault and David Brannen in Plaid Tidings -
A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid, at The Old Globe Nov. 27 - Dec. 26, 2010.
Review by Jack Lyons ~Photo by Henry DiRocco.*

HAPPY TIDINGS

A Special Holiday Edition of
Forever Plaid





Leo Dagnault, David Brannen, Jason Heil and Michael Winther in Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid, at The Old Globe Nov. 27 - Dec. 26, 2010. Photo by Henry DiRocco

By Jack Lyons Theatre and Film/Reviewer

Sequels to successful plays, movies, or TV series are often fraught with uncertainty and trepidation of not being able to live up to the original work. "Forever Plaid" creator, writer, choreographer, and director Stuart Ross, makes sure that his old fans and new fans alike, need not have worried about his sequel disappointing his audiences. This sparkling Christmas Holiday production continues the musical journey where the original show left off.

The story of "Plaid Tidings" continues the celestial journey of the 1950's singing group whose lives were lost in an accident involving a busload of teens en route to see "The Ed Sullivan Show". In the sequel, the Plaids are encouraged by a heavenly phone call from Rosemary Clooney, urging the high-spirited, four-part harmony boys of "Forever Plaid" – Frankie, Sparky, Jinx, and Smudge, to once more, return to Mother Earth from the ethereal cosmos, to stage a nostalgic musical singing extravaganza for world-weary inhabitants on our troubled planet.

The show is chock full of such standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let it Snow," "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas," and "Home For The Holidays. These are among more than thirty-four songs, and musical numbers that are cleverly and freshly arranged by James Raitt, Brad Ellis, Raymond Berg, and David Snyder. Snyder's fingerprints are all over this

wonderful Holiday show. He's principally responsible for the superb musical continuity and vocal arrangements in the show, all under the watchful eye of director Stuart Ross.

"Forever Plaid" was presented at The Old Globe in the summer of 1991 and soon became the hottest show of that year. It was such an overwhelming success, the production returned for a second two-month engagement the following November. Fans kept pressing for a sequel to the ever-popular story of the Four Plaids. Ross, clever fellow that he is, understands that everything on earth has a season and a time for doing what all talented and successful creators do – they write a sequel.

"Plaid Tidings" may sport a new cast in this iteration, but the magic is still there. The cast of "Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid" stars four extremely talented singers, dancers, and actors: David Brannen as Sparky, Leo Dagnault as Jinx, Jason Heil as Smudge, and Michael Winther as Frankie. The quartette is the epitome of a smooth-working ensemble who send out the vibe that they really enjoy working together. Their production numbers highlighting various songs, such as "Jamaica Farewell," "Kingston Market" "Moments To Remember" "Mele Kalikimaka," "Let It Snow", and "Carol of the Bells" (where they bring onstage an audience member to help with the number), are

splendidly clever and creatively staged. The musical selections in the show give each star an opportunity to show his individual stuff. And there's plenty of "stuff" from this "fab four" to show their audience.

The state-of-the-art, 250-seat Sheryl and Harvey White venue is a good fit for this Holiday show. We get to see the entire stage area being used by Ross, as he put his energetic cast through their paces. There isn't a dull moment in this musical valentine to four-part harmony groups. According to Ross, The Plaids perform in the style of the great 50's and 60's groups like: The Four Lads, the Hi Lo's, The Four Freshmen, and The Four Aces.

"Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid" is a Holiday show for the entire family, but it really resonates with folks over 50. However, I did see some under-twelve year olds on opening night who seemed to be really involved with the on-stage antics of the four Plaids. The show runs through December 26th.

For reservations and ticket information go online to www.TheOldGlobe.org or call 619-234-5623.

Theatre Review – "Plaid Tidings"
Old Globe Theatre - Sheryl and Harvey White Stage
San Diego, CA

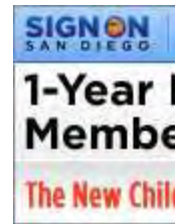




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NIGHT AND DAY



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For one local actor, "Plaid" is a plum

BY JAMES HEBERT

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2010 AT 9:33 P.M.

Year after year, San Diego's smaller theater companies turn out some startlingly good drama, on budgets that often are alarmingly small. And a good share of the credit goes to the diehard local actors who dedicate themselves to those theaters' work. Rest assured, those performers are hardly getting rich off their efforts. Very few even make a living at it. And plenty among them elect to leave town.



/ DAREN SCOTT

If you see enough theater here, the faces and names of some of those onstage start to become familiar, as they journey from play to play, company to company. And while

Jason Heil with Rosina Reynolds in Cygnet Theatre's "Noises Off."

those actors wouldn't be doing the work if they didn't love theater, you can bet that the best of them would love to leap to the biggest stages in town: Those of the Old Globe and La Jolla Playhouse, San Diego's two nationally renowned regional theaters.

It's a difficult feat, because those institutions, while they do make efforts to cast local talent, have the power and prestige to bring in top actors from around the country. All of which is to say: Here's to Jason Heil, who (as the theater announced today) is about to make his Globe debut in the upcoming production of "[Plaid Tidings](#)."

Heil's is a local success story that ought to hearten any performer acting his or her heart out on this town's less-heralded stages. He has worked all over San Diego County, from the 49-seat former Compass Theatre (where I first saw him in an ace staging of "Three Days of Rain") to the fast-rising Cygnet Theatre (where he showed a deft touch for comedy in "Noises Off") to numerous roles at the bigger Lamb's Players Theatre and Moonlight Stage Productions, where he also has directed. His most high-profile credit to date was an ensemble role a few years ago in the Playhouse's "Zhivago."

With "Plaid" (not the most hard-hitting show Heil has ever been cast in, but still), he joins a trio of veteran actors that includes two former leads from the Globe's "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" (So *that's* where the Mean Ones go in the afterlife.)

It's a big step for Heil, but it's also, in its small way, an encouraging indicator of the health of the local theater ecosystem. The Globe and Playhouse have well-deserved reputations for sending shows on to Broadway and Tony-winning glory (with the Playhouse-launched musical "Memphis" being the most recent example). But that kind of success doesn't happen in a vacuum; it happens, at least in part, because San Diego has artists like Heil who do big-time work for some of the smallest audiences, and help make this a savvy and serious theater town from the ground up.

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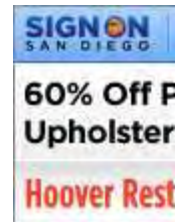
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"Forever Plaid" franchise rolls on after two decades

BY JAMES HEBERT

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 17, 2010 AT 9:40 A.M., UPDATED NOVEMBER 24, 2010 AT 9:10 A.M.

Stuart Ross may have earned his [theatrical](#) stripes (the near-criminally crisscrossed kind) with the forever-popular "[Forever Plaid](#)" franchise, which had a key early production nearly two decades ago at the [Old Globe Theatre](#).

But for the show's creator, writer, director and all-around Mad Plaid-er, it really all started with beauty school.



Ross wasn't a student, being only 3 at the time. Instead, he spent every Wednesday at his family's greasy-spoon in Yorktown Heights, N.Y., while his regular sitter got the day off to indulge her cosmetological jones.

"My parents kept me in the diner, in a crib," Ross recalls. "They would give me 45s from the jukebox. I used to love looking at those records — the labels, the covers. I loved watching the jukebox."

That early immersion in the music of the time — particularly the sounds of close-harmony "guy groups" like the Four Freshmen and the Four Aces — eventually helped inspire the sweetly satirical "Plaid," which next week comes home to the Globe in the form of the holiday show "Plaid Tidings."

The revue, now a popular property on the seasonal circuit, gets a new look at the Balboa Park theater, where it'll be done in the round as the first true holiday show in the Globe's arena-style Sheryl and Harvey White performance space.

Still, it sticks to the core of the "Plaid" story: The saga of a rising, decidedly square vocal quartet, struck down just before their big break by a tragic road accident involving a busload of Catholic schoolgirls. (True to the show's winsome mix of parody and poignancy, the bus is heading to a performance by those harbingers of guy-group doom, the Beatles.)

In the original show, the boys return from the great beyond for a shot at the glory that so cruelly eluded them. In "Plaid Tidings," they drop in again, like heavenly revelers bellying up to the Christmas buffet for one more helping.

Ross himself has been on a bit of a "Plaid" fast — he rarely puts up the shows himself these days. (The stagings that pop up frequently around the country are licensed productions.)

But an opportunity to work at the Globe again, and rethink the show for a new space, brought Ross back to the theater, which in 1991 had its biggest box-office success to that time with its first stab at "Plaid."

NELVIN C. CEPEDA

"PLAID TIDINGS" Leo Daignault, Michael Winther, Jason Heil and David Brannen.

"Plaid Tidings"

Old Globe Theatre

When: Previews start Saturday. Opens Dec. 2.
Schedule: Tuesdays-Fridays, 7 p.m.; Saturdays-Sundays, 2 and 7 p.m. (no matinees this weekend); through Dec. 26.

Where: White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park.

Tickets: \$35-67

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Online:

theoldglobe.org

The show, which Ross had developed as a cabaret-style piece on small stages in New York, quickly spawned versions around the world. Closer to home, it became [San Diego](#)'s longest-running musical in a later staging at the former Theatre in Old Town, where it ran for more than four years.

Not bad for a show that was researched “mostly from the backs of [record albums](#),” as Ross puts it now.

He's talking under the sounds of the Globe's four Plaids — David Brannen (Sparky), Leo Daignault (Jinx), Jason Heil (Smudge) and Michael Winther (Frankie) — harmonizing to the piano of musical director Don LeMaster at a midafternoon rehearsal.

Some of the songs they run through in the session (the show touches on some 40 tunes in all): “Psycho Christmas,” a medley that projects the lads' apoplexy at being called from heaven again; “Holiday Talk,” a jazzy nonsense song that name-drops Kwanzaa, dreidels and other multicultural motifs; and “Twuz the Nite B4,” which has the quartet plunging awkwardly into [hip-hop](#).

It's all done in fun, says Ross — but also, ideally, with at least a whiff of underlying substance.

“(Imitators) always forget that part,” says Ross. “The heart, the innocence — the loser aspect of it.

“(You have to) make sure it doesn't fall into camp. It really could go down that rabbit hole quick. You've got to play the longing. Play the sadness.

“Play the yearn.”

Clearly, there's a method to his plaid-ness.

jim.hebert@uniontrib.com • (619) 293-2040 • Twitter @jimhebert

SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

November 25, 2010 NIGHT + DAY



Holiday ‘Plaid’-itude

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

Quartet returns to the Globe for song-filled season’s greetings on a new stage

Stuart Ross may have earned his theatrical stripes (the near-criminally crisscrossed kind) with the forever-popular “Forever Plaid” franchise, which had a key early production nearly two decades ago at the Old Globe Theatre. But for the show’s creator, writer, director and all-around Mad Plaid-er, it really all started with beauty school.

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“

(You have to) make sure it doesn’t fall into camp. It really could go down that rabbit hole quick. You’ve got to play the longing. Play the sadness. Play the yearn.”

Stuart Ross • creator, writer, director

“Plaid Tidings”

Old Globe Theatre
When: Previews start Saturday. Opens Dec. 2. Schedule: Tuesdays-Fridays, 7 p.m.; Saturdays-Sundays, 2 and 7 p.m. (no matinees this weekend); through Dec. 26.
Where: White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park.
Tickets: \$35-\$67
Phone: (619) 234-5623
Online: theoldglobe.org

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Plaid sightings

Weaving together some tidbits about the Globe's holiday show:

- The "Plaid" galaxy of shows includes "The Sound of Plaid" (a "Glee"-like version meant for school use) and the in-development piece "Random Acts of Plaidness."
- In 2008, creator-writer-director Stuart Ross directed a film version of "Forever Plaid," featuring David Hyde Pierce as the heavenly emcee.
- The Globe's "Plaid Tidings" includes two actors (David Brannen and Leo Dagnault) who previously played the lead in "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" at the theater.
- For the musical number "We Wish You a Perry Christmas," projections are used to make it appear that the actors are performing with Perry Como.
- After "Forever Plaid" had two hit runs at the Globe in 1991, the theater's costume shop landed the longtime job of creating plaid jackets for revivals of the show nationwide.
- By an act of Parliament, the wearing of plaids was forbidden for a time in 18th-century Scotland. (The "Plaid" lads are probably safe from prosecution.)

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

David Brannen (top), Michael Winther (center), Leo Dagnault (lower left) and Jason Heil (lower right) are the four Plaids at the Old Globe Theatre.
NELVIN C. CEPEDA • U-T

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'Plaid' creator excited to bring 'Tidings' adaptation to Old Globe

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'Plaid' creator excited to bring 'Tidings' adaptation to Old Globe

By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com North County Times - Californian | Posted: Wednesday, December 1, 2010 1:51 pm | No Comments Posted | [Print](#)

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[Buy this photo](#) (clockwise from top left) Leo Daignault, Michael Winther, David Brannen and Jason Heil in Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid, at The Old Globe Nov. 27 - Dec. 26, 2010. Photo by Henry DiRocco.



In 1991, Stuart Ross brought his off-Broadway musical "Forever Plaid" to San Diego for an engagement at the Old Globe, and it was an experience he'd never forget.

"We'd been running in New York for a year, but the Old Globe was the first theater where the whole community embraced the show," said Ross in a recent phone interview.

"The reviews were incredible, and on the day the best review came out, the Plaids were doing a live event in Fashion Valley ... broadcast live on the radio. The DJ read the whole review on the air, and the Globe had to get more phones to handle all the calls that came in. The whole run sold out, based on that one review."

This month, Ross and his Plaids will be back at the Old Globe in a holiday edition of the show known as "Plaid Tidings." This version uses much of the same script from the original musical comedy, but adds a few twists as well as what Ross calls "Plaid-erized" versions of popular holiday songs.

For those not initiated to the Plaid world, it's the story of a nerdy men's harmony quartet, The Plaids, on the eve of their big debut. While driving to the show in 1964, the Plaids are killed in a collision with a school bus (carrying Catholic teens to the Beatles debut on the "Ed Sullivan Show"). But thanks to an astral alignment and other mysteries of the universe, the Plaids are temporarily resurrected for the opportunity to perform the show they never got to do in life.

In "Plaid Tidings," the Plaids get celestial help from Rosemary Clooney, and they put on their version of a Christmas special with help from Alvin and the Chipmunks, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and many others.

Starring in the Globe's "Plaid Tidings" production are two local musical theater vets --- David Brannen (as fun-loving "Sparky") and Jason Heil (as geeky "Smudge") ---- and actors Leo Daignault (as ever-nervous "Jinx") and Michael Winther (as heartthrob "Frankie").

Ross directs the Globe production, and he talked about the show during an interview from the waiting room of his doctor's office in Los Angeles earlier this month.

Question: Tell me about the genesis of "Forever Plaid" back in 1990.

Answer: I was doing a major overhaul of my life, cleaning out closets and getting rid of things, and I came across old records my brother had given to me in the late '50s when he went away to college and I was 4 years old. They were 45 EPs of Rosemary Clooney, Perry Como, the Four Aces and the Four Lads. Also, my parents had a diner, and the jukebox guy would give me all the records that nobody played anymore when rock 'n' roll took over. These old songs were so corny and sentimental, but the passion of these singers was astounding. I looked at the pictures of these groups, and they were such nerds. There'd be a gorgeous woman on the record sleeve and four geeky guys in tuxedos in a photo inset. They were so out of period, and it looked like they'd never seen a woman. I thought there might be something there about all that romance and passion in their music and none of it in their lives.

Q: Have you ever kept track of how many productions "Forever Plaid" has had over the years? And what do you think is the secret to its evergreen success?

A: I haven't kept track, but maybe 700 to 1,000 productions? I think the reason it's so popular to produce is that it's a small-cast show and people can do it easily. Also it's very consistent. If you get four handsome guys who are in shape and in nice tuxedos, nobody will complain.

Q: How much has the show changed over the years?

A: Not very much. The show in 1990 was pretty much the same show people see today. Maybe 20 percent of it is different because we've added some shtick over the years.

Q: How did you come up with the idea for "Plaid Tidings"?

A: Back in 2001, I was doing "The Boswell Sisters" at the Old Globe, and the Pasadena Playhouse asked me if I would do a Christmas sequel to "Plaid." I didn't really want to do it, and then 9/11 happened and I wanted to. I had to jump back in and re-create those warm, gushy feelings you get from the comfort food of musical theater.

It was about that sense of family and nostalgia and returning home, not capri pants and poodle appliques. When I was growing up, those TV Christmas specials were really wondrous to me in how they translated the warm feelings of Christmas without all the commercial crassness. I was trying to do them justice and celebrating the magical memories of what it felt like to stare out your window and see Christmas lights on your neighbors' houses and snow on the front lawn.

Q: You're directing the Old Globe show. Is that something you try to do regularly to keep tabs on the show?

A: No, this is an exception because I love San Diego and wanted to come "home" for the holidays. I directed 54 productions of it in the early years, so I did my due diligence. I hadn't directed the show for years and years, then I directed it in 2009 for a film version. I prefer to spend my time thinking of new ways to do "Plaid."

Q: What are some of the other "Plaid" versions you've developed?

A: We've got "The Sound of Plaid," which is a glee club version of "Forever Plaid" done for co-ed choirs at schools and for community groups. It's the same songs, but they're written for 24 voices. And now I'm working on "Random Acts of Plaidness," where we'll push the envelope of where music is with Madonna, "Miami Vice," Carl Orff, the Barenaked Ladies and Eminem. It's a mashup. We did one thing where we combined "Sh-boom" with "Who Let the Dogs Out" and "How Much Is That Doggie in the Window." We had such great fun, we couldn't stop laughing. We came up with the concept that once a song is sung, recorded and played, it doesn't vanish, it floats in the universe and combines with other songs, so we do a megamix. Hopefully we'll be able to hear some of it next spring.

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"Plaid Tidings ---- A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid"

When: Opens Thursday and runs through Dec. 26; showtimes, 7 p.m. Tuesdays-Sundays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays

Where: Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

Tickets: \$35 and up

Info: 619-234-5623

NORTH COUNTY TIMES

December 2, 2010



"PLAID TIDINGS"

"Forever Plaid" gets a peppermint twist with this holiday edition of the long-running musical comedy at the Old Globe.

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‘Plaid’ creator brings ‘Tidings’ to Old Globe

BY PAM KRAGEN
pkragen@nctimes.com

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www.theoldglobe.org

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See ‘Tidings,’ 22

‘Tidings’

Continued from Page 20

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The cast of the Old Globe’s “Plaid Tidings,” clockwise from top left, Leo Daignault, Michael Winther, David Brannen and Jason Heil. Photo by Henry DiRocco.

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Posted: Thursday, November 4, 2010 10:39 am | Updated: 10:50 am, Thu Nov 4, 2010.

Posted on November 4, 2010



by **Kelly Bennett**

I've wondered about this since I started this beat: How often are local actors picked for roles at San Diego's two big regional theatres?

The U-T's James Hebert has a [great story today](#) about local actor Jason Heil, who'll be playing a lead role at The Old Globe's production of Plaid Tidings.

Heil has been working all over town in smaller theatres for years, and has played a smaller role at the La Jolla Playhouse, but this is his first lead role at one of San Diego's big two. As Hebert points out, this is a big deal because the two larger theatres can afford to bring in big stars from all over the country.

Here's Hebert:

It's a big step for Heil, but it's also, in its small way, an encouraging indicator of the health of the local theater ecosystem. The Globe and Playhouse have well-deserved reputations for sending shows on to Broadway and Tony-winning glory (with the Playhouse-launched musical "Memphis" being the most recent example). But that kind of success doesn't happen in a vacuum; it happens, at least in part, because San Diego has artists like Heil who do big-time work for some of the smallest audiences, and help make this a savvy and serious theater town from the ground up.

Interesting context and insight about the local theatre scene.

What do you wish you knew more about the local theatre scene? Drop me a line directly at kelly.bennett@voiceofsandiego.org or 619.325.0531 and follow me on Twitter: [@kellyrbennett](https://twitter.com/kellyrbennett).

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It's not a holiday without a little 'Plaid Tidings'

BY DIANA SAENGER
Contributor

Who better to usher in the holiday season than writer, director and choreographer Stuart Ross with his "Plaid Tidings: A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid" at the Old Globe Theatre in Balboa Park.



With its heartfelt story, wonderful holiday tunes and terrific performances by the Plaid Tidings lads, the production will offer superb family entertainment, Nov. 27-Dec. 26.

The Holiday Edition of "Tidings" continues the story that recalls how four teens in a singing group lost their lives in a tragic accident. But, thanks to a heavenly phone call from their idol, Rosemary Clooney, a way for them to return to Earth and entertain fans with tunes like "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" and "Let It Snow" surfaces. Anyone who

has seen this long-running show, (staged at The Old Globe in 1991) can't deny its nostalgic appeal.

Ross knows why it has remained so popular. "It's all about rooting for the underdog because these guys don't believe how good they are," Ross said. "They didn't have much of a life, but what they had was a unique and passionate take on music."

Portraying the Plaids are David Brannen ("Grinch," "Crazy For You," "Singin' in the Rain," "Big River," "A Chorus Line") as Sparky; Leo Daignault (originated the role of Jinx in "Plaid Tidings," "Grinch," "Avenue Q," "The Scarlet Pimpemel,"

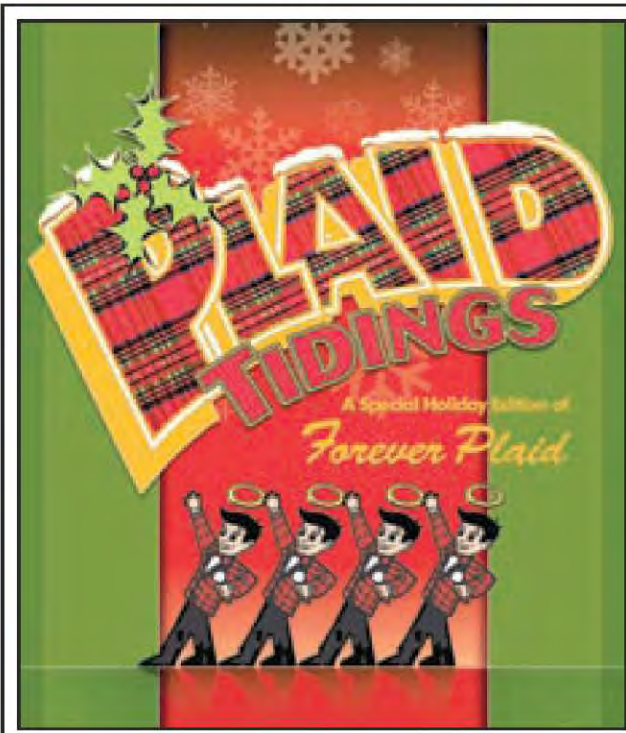
If you go

- **What:** "Plaid Tidings: A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid"
- **When:** Matinees, evenings Nov. 27-Dec. 26
- **Where:** The Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park
- **Tickets:** From \$35
- **Contact:** (619) 23-GLOBE. oldglobe.org.

"Forever Plaid" Boston, San Diego, Tokyo and Chicago) as Jinx; Jason Heil ("31 Bond," "Cabaret," "The Taming of the Shrew," "Dracula," "Zhivago") as Smudge; and Michael Winther ("The Boys from Syracuse," "Falsettos," "Songs from an Unmade Bed," Globe's "King Lear," "Damn Yankees," "Forever Plaid") as Frankie.

Ross ("Breaking Up," "The Boswell Sisters," "A Leap of Faith," "Enter Laughing: The Musical") said his inspiration for creating the show began when he was a kid.

"I had a 14-year-old brother, and I loved the record covers on his 45s," he said. "I remember the groups, like



David Brannen



Jason Heil



Leo Daignault



Michael Winther

'Plaid Tidings: A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid' plays at The Old Globe Theatre, Nov. 27-Dec. 26. COURTESY

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It's not a holiday without a little 'Plaid Tidings'

By **Diana Saenger**

Contributor

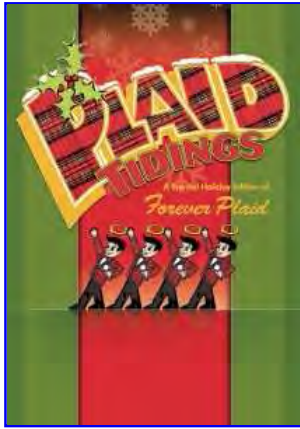
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ARTS

'Plaid' Is Hot for the Holidays—and Lemon Grove Gets Into the Act

Local resident Jason Heil performs in "Plaid Tidings: A Special Holiday Edition of 'Forever Plaid'" at the Old Globe Theatre.

By **Pat Launer** November 27, 2010

Recommend

Be the first of your friends to recommend this.

Remember plaid? That would be *Forever Plaid*.

Well, the musical comedy phenom, cash cow and cottage industry is back.

A paean to tight-harmony guy groups, *Forever Plaid* (<http://theoldglobe.org/information/latestnews/index.aspx#PLAIDLIVE>), conceived and directed by Stuart Ross, premiered off-Broadway in 1990. Its local debut was in 1991 at the Old Globe in Balboa Park. In 2003, after zillions of productions worldwide, Ross wrapped up a holiday gift of *Plaid*. Now, *Plaid Tidings* brings its relentless cheer to the Globe theater once again.

One of the new Plaids is Lemon Grove resident Jason Heil. He's joined by San Diegoan David Brannen (a former Globe "Grinch"), and *Plaid* veterans Michael Winther (who appeared at the Globe in *Forever Plaid*, *King Lear* and *Damn Yankees*) and Leo Daignault (who played Jinx in San Diego and other cities, and reprised the role in the *Plaid Tidings* premiere at Pasadena Playhouse). The show is directed and choreographed by creator Ross, with assistant direction from local actor and singer David Humphrey.



PHOTOS (6)



"It's *Plaid Redux*," said Heil of the holiday show. In *Forever Plaid* we learned that the four geeky Plaid-lads were killed in a car accident in 1964, on their way to their first big gig (at the Airport Hilton). Twenty-seven years later, they're brought back to earth to play that sadly aborted the concert.

In the new show, they return from the "other side" yet again, to perform a Christmas special. They sing a few songs from their first show ("Stranger in Paradise," "Sha Boom," and others), and mix in holiday standards, including a hip-hop version of "'Twas the Night Before Christmas." And there's another visit to the Ed Sullivan Show, which was a highlight of *Forever Plaid*.

"These four sad sacks never reached adulthood," said Heil. "They're little man-boys. But the music they make is gorgeous, with incredible harmonies and spectacular arrangements."

Heil plays Smudge, the ulcer-riddled worrier ("a little like I used to be!"). He gets to dance, rap, play bongos, juggle—and become Ed Sullivan. "It's just good, silly fun," he said.

Since he moved to San Diego from New York in 2004, Heil has kept busy as an actor and director. He's performed around the country, but since settling into Lemon Grove with his wife, Kim Montelibano Heil, an education associate at the Globe, and his two children, age 5 and 2, he's focused his work locally. Heil has appeared at theaters all over the county, including the La Jolla Playhouse, in the premiere of *Zhivago*, and Lamb's Players Theatre, where he's an associate artist.

Next up: he will direct Neil Simon's *Barefoot in the Park* for Moonlight Stage Productions in January, and in March, he will play the Nazi Ernst in Cygnet Theatre's *Cabaret*.

"I'm very lucky," Heil admitted. "I'm booked through next May. So I can relax and enjoy my house and yard, my fruit trees and neighbors. Lemon Grove is a great community for us and our kids. Now, I get to perform at the Globe, singing great classic songs, in wonderful harmony."

That's what *Plaid* is all about: putting a little harmony in a discordant world.

Plaid Tidings begins previews Nov. 27, and runs through Dec. 26.

Performances are Tuesday-Saturday at 7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m. (except for Dec. 4, when the Saturday performances are at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.)

Tickets range from \$35 to \$67, and are available at 619-23-GLOBE (234-5623) or theoldglobe.org (<http://www.theoldglobe.org/tickets/production.aspx?PID=8889>).

What plays are you planning to see this holiday season? [Tell us in the comments.](#)



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Tis the season to join together in harmony. Here are some likely music highlights for the upcoming month.

Holiday Jazz Concert at the Athenaeum

Featuring Solveig Slettahtjell, Tord Gustavsen and Sjur Miljeteig

Dec. 5, 7:30 p.m. La Jolla Athenaeum Music & Arts Library, 1008 Wall St. Tickets: \$19-\$24; (858) 454-5872 or l Athenaeum.org/jazz

White Christmases don't come much whiter than those in Norway, the long, slender Scandinavian country that stretches up to the Arctic Circle. Likewise, Christmas-themed albums don't come much better than "Natt I Bethlehem," the enchanting 2008 album by three of Norway's most heralded jazz musicians — singer Solveig Slettahtjell, pianist Tord Gustavsen and trumpeter Sjur Miljeteig.

Slettahtjell, a member of the Slow Motion Quintet, has an exquisite voice and impeccable taste. So do her two bandmates, who resist the urge to "jazz up" the 14 Yule-themed songs featured on "Natt I Bethlehem." Those whisper-soft songs (four sung in English, the rest in Norwegian) will provide the foundation for the trio's all-ages Dec. 5 Athenaeum concert, which promises to be a marvel of hushed intimacy and light-as-a-feather beauty. The fact that Slettahtjell, 39, sings mostly in her native tongue allows non-Norwegian listeners to focus on the her finely nuanced voice and her ability to make stately, age-old melodies sound fresh, if not born again.

Dan Hicks and The Hot Licks "Crazy for Christmas" CD Release Tour, featuring Jim Kweskin and Geoff Muldaur

Dec. 15, 8 p.m. Belly Up Tavern, 143 S. Cedros Ave., Solana Beach. Tickets: \$22-\$24; (858) 481-8140 or bellyup.com

A onetime contemporary of the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane and other pioneering San Francisco rock legends, with whom he regularly shared stages in the 1960s, Dan Hicks considers himself "more of a hipster than a hippie." By any name, his zesty blend of swing, old-time country, bebop, folk, blues and other rootsy American styles is an unqualified delight.

So is his new "Crazy for Christmas" album, which mixes such fetching new songs by Hicks as "Santa's Workshop" and "I've Got Christmas by the Tail" with his spirited renditions of "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus," Chuck Berry's rollicking "Run Run Rudolph" and "Santa Gotta Choo Choo" (in actuality a remake of the 1946 Louis Jordan classic, "Choo Choo Ch'Boogie"). As an added bonus, Hicks' Dec. 15 Christmas show at the 21-and-up Belly Up will also feature former Kweskin Jug Band mainstays Jim Kweskin and Geoff Muldaur, two American music treasures who rival him when it comes to making earthy music that exudes joy and wit.

Fresh Sound at Sushi: Roots & Reeds concert series presents Oliver Lake

Dec. 17, 8 p.m. Sushi Contemporary Performing & Visual Arts, 390 11th Ave., East Village, downtown. Tickets: \$11-\$15; (619) 235-8466 or



Lamb's Players Theatre stages "An American Christmas" at the Hotel del Coronado. This year's dinner-and-theater performance will run Dec. 12-26. KEN JACQUES

freshsoundmusic.com

While there is no specific holiday theme to his solo alto saxophone and flute concert here, jazz master Oliver Lake's San Diego appearances are so rare that any time he plays here is a festive event worth celebrating. The co-founder of the justly acclaimed World Saxophone Quartet, which he helped launch in 1977, Lake has made dozens of solo albums and also leads a steel-drum quartet and a big band.

An eclectic's eclectic, he has worked with such jazz luminaries as Jack DeJohnette and Anthony Braxton, such edgy rock stars as Björk and Lou Reed, and such hip-hop mavericks as Mos Def and A Tribe Called Quest. Lake's perpetually forward-looking music suggests he is always planning ahead for a new year of musical adventure.

GEORGE VARGA • U-T

THEATER

When winter rolls around in San Diego, you generally can't fling a sprig of mistletoe without hitting a holiday theater

event of some kind right in the kisser.

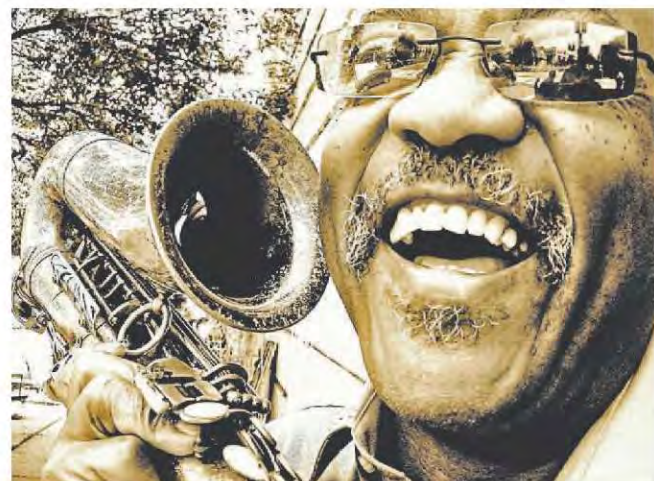
This year is no exception, although the mix is a little different. There's less Scrooge, for one thing. And more George Bailey. Here, a look at what's waiting for you under local theaters' Festivus/Chrismukkah trees.

"It's a Wonderful Life," Welk Resorts Theatre, through Dec. 30: This work, adapted by Tony Palermo, echoes Cygnet Theatre's established live-radio-broadcast spin on the beloved movie. (888) 802-7469 or welktheatresandiego.com

"Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" Old Globe Theatre, through Dec. 26: The Green One (in the person of Jeff Skowron) skulks back for a lucky 13th year, under James Vasquez's direction. (619) 234-5623 or theoldglobe.org

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SEE ARTS • 6



Jazz master Oliver Lake will play a solo concert at Sushi on Dec. 17. YASMIN GROGAN



Dan Hicks and the Hot Licks go "Crazy for Christmas." PHOTO COURTESY OF BELLY UP TAVERN

ARTS

FROM 5

Joe Landry; it has become a holiday tradition at Cygnet. (619) 337-1525 or cygnettheatre.com

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“A Taffeta Christmas,” *Onstage Playhouse*, Dec. 2-5 and 10-12: Another returnee, this ‘50s musical revue brightens the stage of the Chula Vista company. (619) 422-7787 or onstageplayhouse.org

“How Do You Spell Chanukah?” (Dec. 3-5), **“Mistletoe, Music & Mayhem!”** (Dec. 16-19), **“Dickens Unscripted”** (Dec. 20-21), **“Sister’s Christmas Catechism”**



Conductor Jung-Ho Pak and Orchestra Nova will perform “Masterpiece Messiah” Dec. 10-12. PHOTO COURTESY OF ORCHESTRA NOVA

(Dec. 22-24), *North Coast Repertory Theatre*: NCRT is dropping its “Christmas Carol” this year in favor of a series of theatrical stocking stuffers. (858) 481-1055 or northcoastrep.org

“The Messiah,” Dec. 3-19, *Community Actors Theatre*: The popular, music-infused production returns with

its story about the birth of Christ. (619) 264-3391 or communityactorstheatre.com

“Santa Claus is Coming Out,” *Diversionsary Theatre*, Dec. 4-21: A special engagement of Jeffrey Solomon’s solo mockumentary, directed by Joe Brancato. (619) 220-0097 or diversionsary.org

“An American Christmas,” *Lamb’s Players Theatre*, Dec. 12-26: The sumptuous combination of feast and theater performance returns to the Hotel del Coronado. (619) 437-6000 or lambsplayers.org

“An Irish Christmas,” *Balboa Theatre*, Dec. 12: A

one-night show celebrating the yuletide with a Celtic flair. (619) 570-1100 or sdbalboa.org

“Traditions of Christmas,” *Christian Community Theatre (at the Balboa Theatre)*, Dec. 17-23: This “musical spectacular” takes up residence in the Gaslamp’s gorgeous Balboa. (619) 588-0206 or christiancommunitytheater.com

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

HOLIDAY CLASSICAL MUSIC

There are holiday concerts, and then there are concerts during the holidays. While the classical musical scene is a little quieter during December, there are still opportunities to celebrate the season or just plain celebrate:

Handel’s “Messiah”: They used to be as plentiful as “Nutterackers” and nearly as popular as “The Grinch,”

SEE ARTS • 7

ARTS

FROM 6

but now your choices are limited: A singalong “Messiah” by the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus on Dec. 12 at 4 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church in Carlsbad (lajollasympphony.com or (858) 534-4637) or Orchestra Nova’s “Masterpiece Messiah” with the Bach Collegium on Dec. 10 at St. James by-the-Sea Episcopal Church, La Jolla; Dec. 11 at Solana Beach Presbyterian Church; Dec. 12 at First United Methodist Church, Mission Valley (orchestranova.org or (858) 350-0290).

Holiday pops: The San Diego Symphony offers winter pops programs at 8 p.m. Dec. 17; 2 and 8 p.m. Dec. 18; and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 19 at Copley Symphony Hall featuring conductor Matthew Garbutt, vocalist Brian Stokes Mitchell,

and San Diego Master Chorale and the San Diego Children’s Choir (sandiegosymphony.org or (619) 235-0804).

Orchestra Nova is also presenting a 4 p.m. Dec. 19 **“Home for the Holiday”** concert at the California Center for the Arts in Escondido (orchestranova.org or (858) 350-0290).

Raising the spirit: Two of the most spiritual pieces in the classical repertoire will be on stage in San Diego during December: The La Jolla Symphony & Chorus offers **Beethoven’s “Missa Solemnis”** at 8 p.m. Dec. 4 and 2 p.m. Dec. 5 at UCSD’s Mandeville Auditorium. A work on, or arguably beyond, the scale of the Symphony No. 9, it’s rarely performed, and this should be one of conductor Steven Schick’s signature “event” programs (lajollasympphony.com or (858) 534-4637). The San Diego Symphony

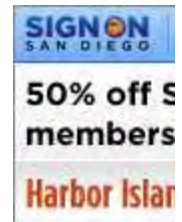
presents **Mahler’s Symphony No. 2, the “Resurrection” Symphony**, also a full-program, transformative work, at 8 p.m. Dec. 10 and 11; 2 p.m. Dec. 12 (sandiegosymphony.org or (619) 235-0804).

You have to be there: The La Jolla Music Society concludes its yearlong **Chopin Bicentennial Celebration**, a survey of the complete works of Chopin, in an 8 p.m. Dec. 10 recital by Melvyn Tan at the Museum of Contemporary Art’s Sherwood Auditorium (at last, Chopin’s Sonata No. 3 in B minor). And at 8 p.m. Dec. 5 at the Balboa, the society will present the remarkable violinist Midori. She was stunning as a child prodigy, and she’s equally stunning, with considerably more insight, as an adult. She has a undeniable gift, and for any music lover it would be a gift to attend this concert.

JAMES CHUTE • U-T



NIGHT AND DAY



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Holiday Guide

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Drama in your stocking

BY JAMES HEBERT

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2010 AT 5:38 P.M.

When winter rolls around in San Diego, you generally can't fling a sprig of mistletoe without hitting a holiday theater event of some kind right in the kisser.

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NELVIN C. CEPEDA

"Plaid Tidings."



The Ho! Ho! Ho-liday Spirit of Coronado

ARTS, OPINION

San Diego's Best Holiday Theater

Ten shows that will ring your chimes (or jingle your bells).

By **Pat Launer** 10:22am

So how do you like your holiday theater fare: Traditional? Comical? Musical? Cynical? With songs sung in four-part '50s harmony or gospel or hip-hop or Spanish? There's something for every taste and temperament on San Diego stages.

Here, in no particular order, are 10 you should sample. Each has its own unique flavor.

1. *Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas*—The Green Meanie returns! The kiddie favorite—fun for adults, too—is back at the Old Globe for the 13th year (it even had a stint on Broadway, but we saw it first!). The brief, intermissionless musical—now available in 11 a.m. performances for the under 3 set—brings the timeless classic to magical life, in all its pink-red-black-and-white glory, plus a splash of fuzzy green. The musical theater version (with book and lyrics by Timothy Mason, music by Mel Marvin) is narrated by Old Max, the Grinch's formerly frisky pup, recalling that fateful year the Grinch made an assault on the Whos down in Whoville and attempted to stop Christmas from coming. Of course, he fails, and everyone learns a lesson about the real meaning of the holiday. There's even a bit of snow falling on the audience at the end to seal the deal.

At the Old Globe Theatre, through Dec. 26. Tickets are \$20-\$57 for kids, \$39-\$77 for adults. For tickets or information, call 619-23-GLOBE (234-5623) or visit [theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org) (<http://www.theoldglobe.org/>)

2. *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*—For the fifth year at Cygnet Theatre, the beloved 1946 Frank Capra film is turned into an old-time radio broadcast, with all the sound effects visible, thanks to the wizardry of Foley master Scott Paulson. The story is a perennial tearjerker. Who among us hasn't thought, at one time or another, that the world wouldn't even notice if we were never born? Who doesn't rejoice at George's 11th-hour deliverance, thanks to the love and generosity of all the folks he'd helped over the years, putting aside all his own dreams to sustain the family's ramshackle Building and Loan in tiny, fictional Bedford Falls, NY? Bring tissues, along with your holiday spirit, for this one, with its outstanding cast, each playing multiple roles and punctuating the action with holiday songs and funny commercial breaks, 1940s style.

At Cygnet Theatre in Old Town, through Dec. 31. Tickets are \$34-\$49. For tickets or information, call 619-337-1525 or visit [cygnettheatre.com](http://www.cygnettheatre.com) (<http://www.cygnettheatre.com/>).

NOTE: *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* is also being presented at the Welk Resort Theatre in Escondido, running with *Big Band Christmas*, through Dec. 26. Tickets are \$54-\$57 (\$68-\$73 including buffet). For tickets or information, call 888-802-7469 or visit [welktheatersandiego.com](http://www.welktheatersandiego.com) (<http://www.welktheatersandiego.com/>).

3. *Plaid Tidings: A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid*—A late addition to the Old Globe's holiday season that's filling the air with splendid four-part 1950s-style songs. The Plaids are back (from the dead, again), to complete their unfinished chords and appear on *The Ed Sullivan Show* once again (which gives the guys an opportunity to show off their multiple talents, from juggling to fire-swallowing). The cast is great, the singing is superb. And if it's nerdy and corny, well, who expects from something that's plaid? There isn't much plot line here; the focus is on tight-harmony songs, which range from '50s favorites from "Forever Plaid" ("Sha-Boom," "Stranger in Paradise," "Moments to Remember") to a mashup of Christmas carols. The arrangements are fantastic; the show, like its predecessors, is supremely silly but simply irresistible.

In the Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, through Dec. 26. Tickets are \$37-\$67. For tickets or information, call 619-23-GLOBE (234-5623) or visit [theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org) (<http://www.theoldglobe.org/>).

4. *Festival of Christmas*—For 33 years, Lamb's Players Theatre has been presenting a Festival show, one of 14 scripts penned by resident playwright Kerry M. Lamb, who also appears in this year's offering, *It's Christmas ... and It's Live!* (<http://coronado.patch.com/articles/dramatic-fun-for-the-whole-family>) Set in a 1950s TV studio, circa 1952, before a holiday broadcast of *The Festival of Popular Song*, the show brings together an array of quirky characters who get snowed in and have to do nothing to do but sing. The arrangements are spectacular, and the singing and costumes are too. The plot may be a tad shopworn and sentimental, but it's still a music-filled activity for the whole family.

At Lamb's Players Theatre (<http://coronado.patch.com/listings/lambs-players-theatre-2>) in Coronado, through Dec. 29. Tickets are \$28-\$58. For tickets or information, call 619-437-6000 or visit [lambsplayers.org](http://www.lambsplayers.org) (<http://www.lambsplayers.org/>).

5. *An American Christmas*—Another Lamb's Players tradition, going strong for nearly two decades, *An American Christmas* (<http://coronado.patch.com/articles/an-american-christmas>)



PHOTOS (6)



[/youre-invited-to-a-holiday-dinner-at-the-del](#)) takes you back a century every year. So it's 1910, and you're invited to the Hotel Del Coronado for dinner with the Marshall family, plus a little news, history and lots of glorious song, from popular tunes of the day to Christmas classics. It's all intertwined with a delicious five-course gourmet dinner, served up by the cast of 28, which provides a complete and festive evening of seasonal entertainment.

At the [Hotel Del Coronado](#) (<http://coronado.patch.com/listings/hotel-del-coronado-2>), through Dec. 26. Tickets are \$120; \$35 for children 5-12. For tickets information, call 619-437-6000 or visit [lambsplayers.org](http://www.lambsplayers.org) (<http://www.lambsplayers.org/>).

6. *La Pastorela de Libertad*—It's the 20th anniversary of Teatro Máscara Mágica's Mexican musical twist on the traditional Christmas story. A folk art form dates back to the very beginning of Christianity, the pastorela follows the journey of the shepherds to Bethlehem. Along the way, they face danger and temptations placed in their path by the evil Lucifer and his wicked minions. The bilingual script (primarily English, with carols sung in Spanish), is created and updated year by year by local playwright Max Branscomb, who has provided more than 40 pastorelas to cities on both sides of the border. The cast, helmed by acclaimed director William Virchis, includes Miss California finalist Marina Inserra. Feliz Navidad!

At the Lyceum Theatre in Horton Plaza, through Dec. 19. Tickets are \$7-\$15 and are available by calling 619-544-1000.

7. *The Santaland Diaries*—The hilarious radio monologues that launched the career of humorist David Sedaris on NPR were adapted for the stage in 1996. A sold-out run last year, New Village Arts happily brings back versatile, comical Daren Scott as the out-of-work actor who, in desperation, applies for a holiday job as an elf in Macy's Herald Square. His cynical take on the holidays—and life in general—make for a strychnine-laced alternative to the sugar-plum sweetness of the season.

At New Village Arts Theatre in Carlsbad, through Dec. 24. Tickets are \$20. For tickets or information, call 760-433-3245 or visit [newvillagearts.org](http://www.newvillagearts.org) (<http://www.newvillagearts.org/>).

8. *Oh Come All Ye Faithful: Black Nativity, The Musical*—A soulful retelling of the Christmas story, though gospel music, hip-hop, ballet, krunk dance, spoken word, rap and Praise and Worship. In association with The San Diego Continuing Education Division, Common Ground Theatre promises "a powerful, entertaining and soul-uplifting night at the theater." There's a pre-show gospel opener, and a guest appearance by a different local church choir at every performance.

At the Educational Cultural Complex in San Diego, through Dec. 11. Tickets are \$10-\$30. For tickets or information, call 619-263-7911 or visit [commongroundtheatre.org](http://www.commongroundtheatre.org) (<http://www.commongroundtheatre.org/>).

9. *Sister's Christmas Catechism: The Mystery of the Magi's Gold*—Prepare yourself to be transported back to your Catholic school days (and if you didn't have parochial education, you most certainly had some other variety of memorable classroom martinet). This is one of four spinoffs of the uproarious original, *L Catechism*, created by Maripat Donavan. For the holiday hijinks edition, the Chicago native collaborated with Marc Silva and Jane Morris to set you straight on the real story of Christmas (audience members act out the Nativity), and try to figure out what happened to all the gold those Wise Guys brought with them. It is back at North Coast Repertory Theatre for the seventh time; folks just can't seem to get enough of Sister's strict teachings and jocular admonishments. Lots of improv and audience participation, so come with an open mind (in appropriately modest clothes).

At North Coast Repertory Theatre in Solana Beach, Dec. 22-24. Tickets are \$25-\$30. For tickets or information, call 858-481-1055 or visit [northcoastrep.org](http://www.northcoastrep.org) (<http://www.northcoastrep.org/>).

10. *Mistletoe, Music and Mayhem*—This may just become the next local holiday tradition. Local funnymen Phil Johnson and Matt Thompson teamed up with composer Rayme Sciaroni (music and lyrics) to create a brand new holiday cabaret show, featuring some of San Diego's best comical and musical talents. Comedy sketches are interwoven with holiday-inspired songs. Find out how cats, Jews, Japanese, Icelanders and Norwegians celebrate the holiday season—and how wacky writers and performers are hellbent on "melting your heart and tickling your funny bone."

At North Coast Repertory Theatre in Solana Beach, Dec. 16-18. Tickets are \$20-\$25. For tickets or information, call 858-481-1055 or visit [northcoastrep.org](http://www.northcoastrep.org) (<http://www.northcoastrep.org/>).

Now what are you waiting for? Christmas will have come and gone before you can say "red-nosed reindeer!" And don't forget that theater tickets make great stocking stuffers.

Here's to a very merry Christmas and a happy—and dramatic—new year!

What's your favorite holiday show in San Diego? [Tell us in the comments.](#)

Other The Ho! Ho! Ho-liday Spirit of Coronado Articles



[The 12 Days of Christmas in Coronado: Day 3](#)
By [Chris Morrow](#)



[The 12 Days of Christmas in Coronado: Day 2](#)
By [Chris Morrow](#)



[The 12 Days of Christmas in Coronado: Day 1](#)
By [Chris Morrow](#)



[Parade of Lights Sails Past Coronado](#)

Stone Soup Theatre

NON-EQUITY - BUT OCCASIONALLY
USE EQUITY

Compass Theatre

CYC Theatre

Cygnet Theatre

Diversions Theatre

Intrepid Shakespeare Co.

ion theatre

Laterthanever Productions

Lynx Performance Theatre

New Village Arts

Poor Players Theatre Company

SD Black Ensemble

Sledgehammer

Starlight Theatre

Talent To a Muse

Vantage Theatre

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PlayhouseSTEEL MAGNOLIAS at Point Loma
Actors

BLACK NATIVITY: THE MUSICAL



STEEL MAGNOLIAS

BEHIND THE SCENES

with Jenni Prisk

Email Jenni



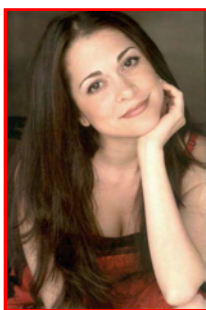
November 18, 2010

Hello there! My apologies, I missed a week! Not because there's no theatre, but because life ran away, as I know yours does too from time to time!

My 2 Cents

There was a lovely *Winter's Tale* that played at The Old Globe for a mere week, and deserved a longer run. A production of the USD Graduate Theatre Program, and skillfully directed by Ray Chambers, the young actors filled the mature roles with great talent. Standouts were Shirine Babb as Paulina, Ben Diskant as Autolycus, Jesse Jensen as Florizel and Ryman Sneed as Hermione. However, all the ensemble was fine in this intriguing and complex story.

The Crucible, a joint production of Moxie and Intrepid Shakespeare, at the Moxie Rolando theatre, is up and running through December 5. Co-directed by Jennifer Eve Thorn and Christy Yael, the intense production requires concentration. It is Arthur Miller's dramatization of the Salem witchcraft trials that took place in Province of Massachusetts Bay during 1692 and 1693. Miller wrote the play as an allegory to McCarthyism, when the US government blacklisted accused communists. Young daughters are the protagonists of the play, very ably led by Callie Prendiville as Abigail Williams, and Mary Warren played by Kelly Iversen. The girls dabble in the woods in witchcraft which leads to a routing of truths throughout the village of Salem as infidelities and evil deeds come to light. Matt Scott stepped into the role of the Reverend Parris for Jon Sachs the night we saw the production and after only one rehearsal, he did a fine job. Sean Cox is deeply troubled and conflicted as John Proctor and Lisel Gorell-Getz as his wife Elizabeth is a bed of torment and honesty, beautiful performance. While the role of Rebecca Nurse is a small one, Rhona Gold fills it with warmth and depth. And a return to the stage by David S. Cohen as Giles Corey is a welcome one. Justin Lang is a fine Reverend John Hale, endeavoring to maintain righteousness and fairness among the townspeople. A simple stage, with sometimes awkward blocking, stark but appropriate lighting, and costumes that depict the period provide the backdrop for a dark and dastardly production that will leave you thinking.



And for more menace and mayhem, do see *Deathtrap* at Scripps Ranch Theatre playing through December 11. Jessica John (left - who marries Fran Gercke on November 22) directs (her first) with a skilled hand; she must direct more! I'm not going to describe the plot, there are too many twists and turns and you must see it for yourself! Eric Poppick anchors the cast as Sidney Bruhl, the failed and failing playwright, who will do anything to score a hit. Poppick is charming and malevolent in the same line, he will mess with your head. He is ably abetted (and abused) by Kevin Koppman-Gue as a former student, Clifford Anderson. Koppman-Gue's stage talent is growing palpably. Natalie Sentz plays Sidney's long suffering (and suffer she does) wife, M. Susan Peck the inimitable Helga ten Dorp who knows everything before it happens (including her daughter's pregnancy) and Charles Maze as the straightforward lawyer who too is persuaded to step out of line! You'll laugh, you'll gasp, and yes, you will scream. Gorgeous set of a craftsman house built by Ted Crittenden and costumes by Jessica John fit the period.

Theatre News

Opening on November 21, *Ruined* by Lynn Nottage, at La Jolla Playhouse. This riveting production extended seven times during its Off Broadway run.

Intrepid Shakespeare is producing a reading of *Cymbeline* at the Encinitas Library on November 22 at 7:30pm.

And at 7pm, also on November 22 at Moxie Theatre in Rolando, you can see a reading of *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan* by Arthur Miller. Most unfortunate that these two readings coincide!

Paradise Hotel plays: November 19, 20 December 2, 3 and 4 at 7:30pm November 21 and December 5 at 2:00pm Tickets are \$14 - \$16 (handling included) Information and Tickets at 619 594-6884. Visit online at theatre.sdsu.edu

The excellent *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde* plays at ion through November 20. Don't miss it!

And Anita Bryant *Died for your Sins* runs at Diversions through November 21.

Picturing My Sister as part of New Village Arts new play festival runs November 19, 20 and 21.

You can see Kasomir and Karoline at the Theodore and Adele Shank Theatre at UCSD through November 20.

And Chronos presents *Tales of Chelm* through November 20. Here's the link to find out where: info@chronostheatre.com



And thanks to Charlene Baldridge I can promote *Plaid Tidings*, opening at The Old Globe theatre on December 2 (well, the press release did say a holiday edition of *Forever Plaid*, so can a girl be excused?) Jason Heil (left) is in the cast, yeah!!

That's it from me, off to the Bay Area for work. Hope you are warm, happy and looking forward to the Holidays. Love, Jenni

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GLOBE: The Old Globe to present PLAID TIDINGS

October 18, 2010

Entertainment Desk

"Plaid" Creator Stuart Ross directs the Special Engagement.

SAN DIEGO — Executive Producer Lou Spisto has announced that the Globe will present a special engagement of Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid. Written, directed and choreographed by Stuart Ross, the musical will run in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre Nov. 27 – Dec. 26. Previews run Nov. 27 – Dec. 1. Opening night is Dec. 2 at 7:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office.

Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid continues the story of the singing group whose lives were lost in an accident involving a busload of teens en route to see "The Ed Sullivan Show." Encouraged by a heavenly phone call from Rosemary Clooney, the high-spirited boys of Forever Plaid – Frankie, Sparky, Jinx and Smudge – are transported from the ethereal cosmos to stage a nostalgic holiday extravaganza for world-weary mortals on Earth. Stuffed with such "Plaid-erized" Christmas standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," Plaid Tidings is one holiday treat that is truly heaven-sent.

Forever Plaid was presented at The Old Globe in the summer of 1991 and became the must-have ticket of the season. Directed by Ross, the show proved such a success that, due to overwhelming popular demand, the production returned for a second two-month engagement the following November. For years afterwards, the Globe's costume facility created the show's unique Plaid jackets for revivals of Forever Plaid across the United States.

Running concurrently with Plaid Tidings is the Globe's 13th annual production of Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The long-running holiday evergreen has become a San Diego holiday tradition and has introduced thousands of children to the joy of live theater. This year's edition runs from Nov. 20 through Dec. 26. Plaid Tidings is the second holiday musical to be presented in the Globe's new Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre. The first was last season's hit revival of I Do! I Do! starring real-life married couple Patrick Page and Paige Davis.

Stuart Ross directed the original New York production of Forever Plaid and many of the long-running productions around the world. He also helmed Forever Plaid: The Movie, which is slated for release in the spring of 2011. At The Old Globe, Ross also directed Michael Cristofer's play Breaking Up and The Boswell Sisters (which he co-wrote for the Globe with Mark Hampton). He directed the critically acclaimed revival of Enter Laughing: The Musical (Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and Lucille Lortel Award nominations) last season in New York. At The Public Theater, he wrote the script and co-wrote the lyrics for the musical Radiant Baby, based on the life of artist Keith Haring. He directed a workshop production of his adaptation of Gilbert and Sullivan's The Gondoliers (co-written with Mark Hampton) at Roundabout Theatre Company. On Broadway, Ross co-wrote the book (with Barry Keating) of the Tony-nominated musical Starmites as well as The Radio City Music Hall Easter Show. Off Broadway he wrote A Leap of Faith (a one woman show for Faith Prince), The Heebie Jeebies, Not-So-New Faces, Tea with Bea and Fun with Dick and Jane: The Musical. His current projects include Standing on Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays opening this fall in Los Angeles, Old Jews Telling Jokes for Off Broadway and the Broadway transfer of Enter Laughing: The Musical.


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Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. There will be no performances on

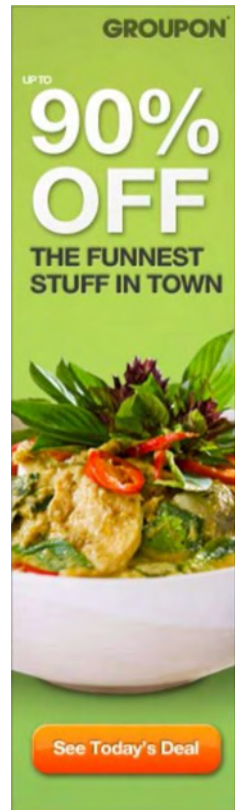
TICKETS to Plaid Tidings can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Performances begin on Nov. 27 and continue through Dec. 26. Ticket prices start at \$35. Performance times: Previews: Saturday, Nov. 27 at 7:00 p.m., Sunday Nov. 28 at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 30 at 7:00 p.m. and Wednesday, Dec. 1 at 7:00 p.m. Regular Performances: Tues-Friday at 7:00 p.m.,

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Christmas.

The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit www.BalboaPark.org.

Brighton Beach Memoirs and Broadway Bound (9/14-11/7), Welcome to Arroyo's (9/25-10/31), The Winter's Tale (11/9-11/14), Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas! (11/20-12/26), Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid (11/27-12/26), Emma – A Musical Romantic Comedy (1/15-2/27), Death of a Salesman (1/22-2/27).

The Tony Award-winning Old Globe is one of the country's leading professional regional theaters and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 75 years. Under the direction of Executive Producer Louis G. Spisto, The Old Globe produces a year-round season of 15 productions of classic, contemporary and new works on its three Balboa Park stages: the 600-seat Old Globe Theatre, the 250-seat Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre and the 612-seat outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, home of its internationally renowned Shakespeare Festival. More than 250,000 people attend Globe productions annually and participate in the theater's education and community programs. Numerous world premieres such as The Full Monty, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, A Catered Affair, and the annual holiday musical Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! have been developed at The Old Globe and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs on Broadway and at regional theaters across the country.



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EAST COUNTY GAZETTE

November 4, 2010

Spotlight on community theatre

Previews by Diana Saenger

Old Globe Theatre

Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, directed by Ray Chambers, and collaboration with the University of San Diego, the nationally-renowned Master of Fine Arts Professional Actor Training Program unfolds Nov. 7 - 14 in the Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre. Destructive jealousy unhinges King Leontes, causing him to lose everything he holds dear. Only an infant left in the wild, an oracle's proclamations and

a statue magically coming to life can lead to his redemption and a happy ending for all. *Plaid Tidings* – A Special Holiday Edition of *Forever Plaid* moves into the theatre to run Nov. 27 - Dec 26. The hilarious, heavenly quartet is coming to The Old Globe to croon their tight swinging harmonic renditions of musical hits from the '50s and '60s. This nostalgic holiday extravaganza is the very best of *Forever Plaid* wrapped up in a nifty package with a big bow on top! Stuffed with such "Plaid-erized" Christmas standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," *Plaid Tidings* is one holiday treat that is truly heaven sent.

Running in the Globe Theatre Nov. 20 - Dec 26 is the annual favorite *Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas!* Dazzling adults and children alike, this favorite holiday fable, back for its 13th incredible year, is a wonderful, whimsical production that will once again jump right off the pages of the classic Dr. Seuss book and onto the Old Globe's stage. Come take part in the fun as the Old Globe Theatre is transformed into the snow-covered Whoville right down to the last can of Who-hash! For more information call (619) 23-GLOBE, www.TheOldGlobe.org



Jeff Skowron returns as The Grinch in the 2010 production of *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* at The Old Globe.

Culture Lust

Culture Lust Weekend: December Nights, 'Plaid Tidings' & Handmade Holiday Shopping



Credit: Richard Benton

Above: The Christmas Story Tree at Balboa Park's December Nights!

By [Angela Carone](#), [Kendra Osburn](#)

December 2, 2010

EVENTS

It's that time of year. For the third consecutive year, Balboa Park is hosting [December Nights](#)! Estimated to attract over 300,000 visitors of all ages, this annual two night event (Friday and Saturday) boasts parades, food, shopping and FREE museum entrance!

Unearth Southern California's secret past alongside Bobby Flash. Native San Diegan and local professor Jim Miller will be reading from his new book [FLASH](#) at San Diego City College this Saturday.

Known for her stylish stage presence, young poet/writer/designer [Kate Durbin will be reading at](#)

[Agitprop](#) this Saturday. The evening will include an art opening and some gurlisque, so leave the little ones at home.

THEATER



Above: Plaid Tidings - A Special Edition of Forever Plaid, will be performing at The Old Globe until December 26th.

‘Tis the season where hipsters aren’t the only one’s wearing plaid, so don your own festive wear and get to the Old Globe for [Plaid Tidings - A Special Edition of Forever Plaid](#). The crooning quartet will be singing songs from the 50’s and 60’s with their usual plaid pizazz until December 26th.

This Christmas, a young boy asks for a doll, gets a truck, think’s he’s been bad and writes a letter of complaint to Santa, prompting Mr. Clause to recall his own doll-wishing days. [Santa Clause is Coming OUT](#) this weekend at Diversionary Theatre!

Kibitz with Marc Silver and Doug Dickerman over some kosher hash this weekend at “[How do you spell Chanukah?](#)” Attempting to solve long standing Jewish mysteries (but committed to noshing and storytelling along the way) Silver and Dickerman are set to make this Stage Show part dinner party, party comedy routine.

Adapted to film, and then to theater from the 1983 Pulitzer Prize winning book, [The Color Purple](#) has been heralded across all three mediums. This “musical about love” is playing at the The Civic theater tomorrow through Sunday.

MUSIC



Above: The Raga Bop Trio

The Show Goes On

By **Ilene Hubbs**

Coming from an area where New York Theater was easily accessible, I became a theater lover at a young age. I saw my first Broadway play at 15 and I was hooked. After that it was my biggest treat. Luckily I married someone who shared this love and we saw everything we could manage. From the first production of "Fiddler on the Roof" to the revival of "South Pacific," we spent our entertainment budget to get the best seats in the house. Moving to San Diego in the 70's, I knew I would love the climate and the beauty, but worried what would happen if we wound up in a theater wasteland.



ILENE HUBBS

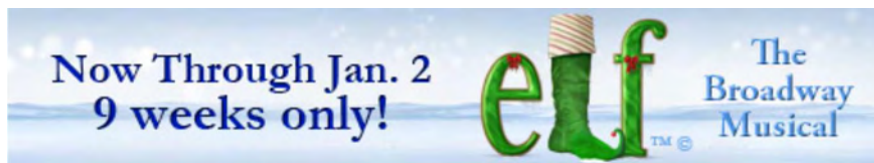
Thirty plus years later, there is nothing to worry about. Quality theater in San Diego is alive and well and thriving. In December I saw three very different productions, each seemingly catering to a specific audience. The Old Globe's production of "Plaid Tidings" was filled with a mostly middle age to elderly group decked out in traditional holiday finery. The house was sprinkled with more than a share of red and green featured mostly on holiday sweaters starring Santa, Rudolph and candy canes, and lots of smiling grandmas with ornament-like earrings hanging proudly from their earlobes. The play had a simple Christmas plot designed to allow four fine singers, known as Forever Plaid, to harmonize to some of the 50's and 60's best ballads. I found myself singing along to "Chances Are," "Mambo Italiano," "White Christmas" and many more great old songs, the kind where lyrics stay in your memory forever. It was sweet and charming and a nice nostalgic exercise for the mind.

A few weeks later I attended "Ruined" at the La Jolla Playhouse.

This provocative and powerful play centered on the atrocities committed against hundreds of thousands of women in the Congo, victimized by soldiers as the spoils of war. This Pulitzer Prize winning play was not easy to watch. It brought these women to life and instilled compassion in me that I'm sure was shared by everyone in the audience. I looked around at times and saw the rapt faces of intelligent playgoers who were there, I surmise, not to smile and sing along, but to learn and feel through the power of theater. The audience was comprised of many age groups and many races, and all seemed to

be affected by the play's ability to both horrify and give hope. The story was emotional, the acting superb and I thought once again I have been able to be part of a fine San Diego theatre experience.

Lastly, I had the joy of seeing "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas" for the second time in six years. Each time I took children who had never seen a play. The first time was with two of my grandchildren who were then five and seven and this time with another grandchild who is seven. To me, there is nothing more joyful than being part of a child's first theater experience. The long standing Grinch is the perfect play for that age group. The story is familiar and the music and scenery are spectacular. Characters are running up and down the aisles, glittery and colorful things are falling out of the sky and everyone is having a wonderful time. But the best part of all, especially for this theater loving grownup is the look on a grandchild's child's face as he experiences the same excitement I felt when the curtain went up for the first time in my life.



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David Brannen, Leo Dagnault Lead PLAID TIDINGS At The Old Globe 11/27-12/26



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Wednesday, November 3, 2010; Posted: 05:11 PM - by [BWW News Desk](#)[Share](#) |[Like](#)

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Executive Producer [Lou Spisto](#) today announced the complete cast and creative team for [The Old Globe's](#) special engagement of Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid. Written, directed and choreographed by [Stuart Ross](#), the musical will run in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre Nov. 27 - Dec. 26. Previews run Nov. 27 - Dec. 1. Opening night is Dec. 2 at 7:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office.

Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid continues the story of the singing group whose lives were lost in an accident involving a busload of teens en route to see "The [Ed Sullivan Show](#)." Encouraged by a heavenly phone call from [Rosemary Clooney](#), the high-spirited boys of Forever Plaid - Frankie, Sparky, Jinx and Smudge - are transported from the ethereal cosmos to stage a nostalgic holiday

extravaganza for world-weary mortals on Earth. Stuffed with such "Plaid-erized" Christmas standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," Plaid Tidings is one holiday treat that is truly heaven-sent.

The cast of Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid features [David Brannen](#) (Sparky), [Leo Dagnault](#) (Jinx), [Jason Heil](#) (Smudge) and [Michael Winther](#) (Frankie).

The creative team includes Sean Fanning (Scenic Design), Charlotte Devaux (Costume Design), Chris Rynne (Lighting Design), [Paul Peterson](#) (Sound Design), Don LeMaster (Music Director), [Steven Withers](#) (Associate Music Director) and Liz Stephens (Stage Manager).

Forever Plaid was presented at [The Old Globe](#) in the summer of 1991 and became the must-have ticket of the season. Directed by Ross, the show proved such a success that, due to overwhelming popular demand, the production returned for a second two-month engagement the following November. For years afterwards, the Globe's costume facility created the show's unique Plaid jackets for revivals of Forever Plaid across the United States.

Running concurrently with Plaid Tidings is the Globe's 13th annual production of [Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!](#) The long-running holiday evergreen has become a San Diego holiday tradition and has introduced thousands of children to the joy of live theater. This year's edition runs from Nov. 20 through Dec. 26.

[David Brannen](#) has previously been seen at the Globe as The Grinch in [Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas](#) ('03 and '04). He has appeared regionally as Bobby Child in Crazy for You, Bill Snibson in Me and My Girl, both Don Lockwood and CosMo

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[Brown](#) in Singin' in the Rain, Huck Finn in Big River, Dick in Dames at Sea, the Fiddler in Fiddler on the Roof, Frank Schultz in Show Boat, Mike in A Chorus Line and Benjamin in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.

[Leo Daignault](#) is a proud member of the [Actors' Equity](#) Association and lives in New York City. He returns to the Globe having previously appeared as The Grinch in [Dr. Seuss'](#) How the Grinch Stole Christmas! ('05). He has appeared on Broadway in Avenue Q and has been featured in the National Tours of Avenue Q, The Full Monty, The Scarlet Pimpernel and Miss Saigon. A Plaid veteran, Daignault originated the role of Jinx in Plaid Tidings at [Pasadena Playhouse](#) and in Forever Plaid in Boston, San Diego, Tokyo and Chicago, where he won an Ollie Award for best vocal performance by a male. His regional theater credits also include [Jim Henson's](#) Emmet Otter and Emmet Otter's Jug-Band Christmas ([Goodspeed Musicals](#)), Miss Saigon (The Muny), Come Rain or Come Shine ([Mark Taper Forum](#)), A Little Night Music (Apple Tree Theatre) and My Three Angels (Center Theatre). His film and television credits include How to Marry a Billionaire: A Christmas Tale, "The Sopranos," "Silk Stalkings" and "Pensacola: Wings of Gold." He was also one of Rosie's Broadway Boys appearing on "The View" and "The [Rachael Ray](#) Show."

[Jason Heil](#) is proud to be making his Globe debut. His New York and regional credits include 31 Bond (Brooklyn Lyceum), Cabaret (Arkansas Repertory Theatre), The Taming of the Shrew and Dracula (Tennessee Repertory Theatre), [James Joyce's](#) The Dead ([American Conservatory Theater](#)), Richard III, Henry IV Part 1, Henry VIII, The Three Musketeers, My Fair Lady and 1776 (Utah Shakespearean Festival), Romeo and Juliet and The Taming of the Shrew (Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival), Hamlet, The Merchant of Venice, As You Like It and Cyrano de Bergerac (Marin Shakespeare Company) and The Winter's Tale and The Learned Ladies (A Noise Within). Heil has appeared in San Diego in [Lucy Simon's](#) Zhivago ([La Jolla Playhouse](#) and New York/London readings), Noises Off (Cygnet Theatre Company), A Christmas Carol (San Diego Repertory Theatre), Three Days of Rain (Compass Theatre), Dracula (North Coast Repertory Theatre), The Goodbye Girl (Moonlight Stage Productions) and is an Associate Artist at Lamb's [Players Theatre](#).

[Michael Winther](#) has previously appeared at the Globe in King Lear, Damn Yankees and Forever Plaid. His Broadway credits include 33 Variations, Mamma Mia!, The Crucible, 1776, Artist Descending a Staircase and Damn Yankees. He has appeared Off Broadway in Songs from an Unmade Bed (New York Theatre Workshop/CD on [Ghostlight Records](#), 2006 Drama Desk and Drama League nominations), Radiant Baby (New York Shakespeare Festival and [The Public Theater](#)) and Hapgood ([Lincoln Center Theater](#)). His recent regional credits include Band Geeks! ([Goodspeed Musicals](#)), Grey Gardens (TheatreWorks, Palo Alto), Most Wanted ([La Jolla Playhouse](#)), Falsettos ([George Street Playhouse](#)), The Boys from Syracuse (CENTERSTAGE) and The People's Temple (Guthrie Theater and Perseverance Theatre). Winther has recently been featured in the concerts of [William Finn's](#) Songs By Ridiculously Talented Composers... ([Barrington Stage Company](#)) and The Songs of Fred Hersch and Hear and Now (Lincoln Center's American Songbook). His recent film and television credits include Meet Dave, Jumper, The Break-Up, Mr. & Mrs. Smith, "Leverage" and "Law & Order."

[Stuart Ross](#) directed the original New York production of Forever Plaid and many of the long-running productions around the world. He also helmed Forever Plaid: The Movie, which is slated for release in the spring of 2011. The Sound of Plaid, the coed glee club version of Forever Plaid, has been performed in schools and colleges around the country. At [The Old Globe](#), Ross also directed [Michael Cristofer's](#) play Breaking Up and The Boswell Sisters (which he co-wrote for the Globe with [Mark Hampton](#)). He directed the critically acclaimed revival of Enter Laughing: The Musical (Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and [Lucille Lortel](#) Award nominations) last season in New York. At [The Public Theater](#), he wrote the script and co-wrote the lyrics for the musical Radiant Baby, based on the life of artist Keith Haring. His adaptation of Gilbert and Sullivan's The Gondoliers was workshopped at [Roundabout Theatre Company](#). On Broadway, Ross co-wrote the book (with [Barry Keating](#)) of the Tony-nominated musical Starmites as well as The Radio City Music Hall Easter Show. Off Broadway he wrote A Leap of Faith (a one-woman show for [Faith Prince](#)), The Heebie Jeebies, Not-So-New Faces, Tea with Bea and Fun with Dick and Jane: The Musical. His current projects include Standing on Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays, opening this fall in Los Angeles, and the Broadway transfer of Enter Laughing: The Musical.

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Whenever we want [Wicked tickets](#) we go to [OnlineSeats](#). They have the best deals on all Broadway shows, from [Jersey Boys tickets](#) for the jukebox musical to family friendly shows with [Lion King tickets](#) and [Addams Family tickets](#). Even find the new [Spiderman the Musical tickets](#).

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LOCATION: [The Old Globe](#) is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit www.BalboaPark.org.

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The Old Globe To Present **PLAID TIDINGS** 11/27-12/1

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Running concurrently with **Plaid Tidings** is the Globe's 13th annual production of **Dr. Seuss'** **How the Grinch Stole Christmas!** The long-running holiday evergreen has become a San Diego holiday tradition and has introduced thousands of children to the joy of live theater. This year's edition runs from Nov. 20 through Dec. 26. **Plaid Tidings** is the second holiday musical to be presented in the Globe's new Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre. The first was last season's hit revival of **I Do! I Do!** starring real-life married couple **Patrick Page** and **Paige Davis**.

Stuart Ross directed the original New York production of **Forever Plaid** and many of the long-running productions around the world. He also helmed **Forever Plaid: The Movie**, which is slated for release in the spring of 2011. At **The Old Globe**, **Ross** also directed **Michael Cristofer's** play **Breaking Up** and **The Boswell Sisters** (which he co-wrote for the Globe with **Mark Hampton**). He directed the critically acclaimed revival of **Enter Laughing: The Musical** (Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and **Lucille Lortel** Award nominations) last season in New York. At **The Public Theater**, he wrote the script and co-wrote the lyrics for the musical **Radiant Baby**, based on the life of artist **Keith Haring**. He directed a workshop production of his adaptation of **Gilbert and Sullivan's The Gondoliers** (co-written with **Mark Hampton**) at **Roundabout Theatre Company**. On Broadway, **Ross** co-wrote the book (with **Barry Keating**) of the Tony-nominated musical **Starmites** as well as **The Radio City Music Hall Easter Show**. Off Broadway he wrote **A Leap of Faith** (a one woman show for **Faith Prince**), **The Heebie Jeebies**, **Not-So-New Faces**, **Tea with Bea** and **Fun with Dick and Jane: The Musical**. His current projects include **Standing on Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays** opening this fall in Los Angeles, **Old Jews Telling Jokes** for Off Broadway and the Broadway transfer of **Enter Laughing: The Musical**.

TICKETS to **Plaid Tidings** can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Performances begin on Nov. 27 and continue through Dec. 26. Ticket prices start at \$35. Performance times: Previews: Saturday, Nov. 27 at 7:00 p.m., Sunday Nov. 28 at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 30 at 7:00 p.m. and Wednesday, Dec. 1 at 7:00 p.m. Regular Performances: Tues-Friday at 7:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. There will be no performances on Christmas.

LOCATION: **The Old Globe** is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit www.BalboaPark.org.



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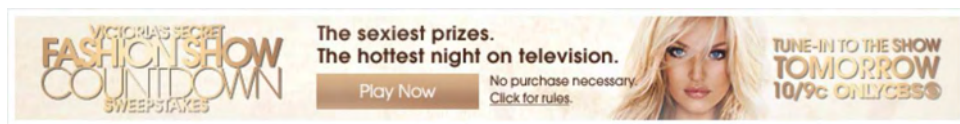
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Monday, November 29, 2010; Posted: 02:11 PM - by [BWW News Desk](#)

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PLAID TIDINGS- A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid, Written, Directed and Choreographed by [Stuart Ross](#)

RUNS: Nov. 27 - Dec. 26, 2010,
Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre

TICKETS: \$35-67.

SYNOPSIS: Plaid Tidings is the hit holiday musical that offers the best of Forever Plaid tied up in a nifty package with a big Christmas bow on top!

CREATIVE TEAM: Sean Fanning (Scenic Design), Charlotte Devaux (Costume Design), Chris Rynne (Lighting Design), [Paul Peterson](#) (Sound Design), Don LeMaster (Music Director), [Steven Withers](#) (Associate Music Director) and Liz Stephens (Stage Manager).

CAST: [David Brannen](#) (Sparky), [Leo Daignault](#) (Jinx), [Jason Heil](#) (Smudge) and [Michael Winther](#) (Frankie).

BOX OFFICE WINDOW HOURS: Noon to final curtain Tuesday through Sunday. [American Express](#), Discover, MasterCard and VISA accepted. (619) 23-GLOBE [234-5623].

LOCATION: [The Old Globe](#) is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. Free parking is available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For parking information visit [www.BalboaPark.org](#).

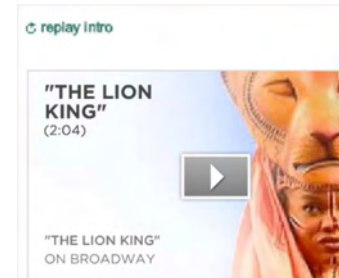
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**Erin Reiter**

Plaid Tidings!

October 13th, 2010 5:49 pm PT



Plaid Tidings
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Executive Producer Lou Spisto today announced that the Globe will present a special engagement of *Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid*. Written, directed and choreographed by Stuart Ross, the musical will run in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre Nov. 27 – Dec. 26. Previews run Nov. 27 – Dec. 1. Opening night is Dec. 2 at 7:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office.

Plaid Tidings– A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid continues the story of the singing group whose lives were lost in an accident involving a busload of teens en route to see "The Ed Sullivan Show." Encouraged by a heavenly phone call from Rosemary Clooney, the high-spirited boys of *Forever Plaid* – Frankie, Sparky, Jinx and Smudge – are transported from the ethereal cosmos to stage a nostalgic holiday extravaganza for world-weary mortals on Earth. Stuffed with such "Plaid-erized" Christmas standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," *Plaid Tidings* is one holiday treat that is truly heaven-sent.

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Forever Plaid was presented at The Old Globe in the summer of 1991 and became the must-have ticket of the season. Directed by Ross, the show proved such a success that, due to overwhelming popular demand, the production returned for a second two-month engagement the following November. For years afterwards, the Globe's costume facility created the show's unique Plaid jackets for revivals of *Forever Plaid* across the United States.

Running concurrently with *Plaid Tidings* is the Globe's 13th annual production of *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* The long-running holiday evergreen has become a San Diego holiday tradition and has introduced thousands of children to the joy of live theater. This year's edition runs from Nov. 20 through Dec. 26. *Plaid Tidings* is the second holiday musical to be presented in the Globe's new Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre. The first was last season's hit revival of *I Do! I Do!* starring real-life married couple Patrick Page and Paige Davis.

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Tickets to *Plaid Tidings* can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Performances begin on Nov. 27 and continue through Dec. 26. Ticket prices start at \$35. Performance times: Previews: Saturday, Nov. 27 at 7:00 p.m., Sunday Nov. 28 at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 30 at 7:00 p.m. and Wednesday, Dec. 1 at 7:00 p.m. Regular Performances: Tues-Friday at 7:00

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p.m., Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. There will be no performances on Christmas.

The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit www.BalboaPark.org.

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Celebrate the Holidays with Plaid Tidings at The Old Globe



The Old Globe in San Diego has announced that **Plaid Tidings**, the hit holiday musical that offers the best of **Forever Plaid** has been added to its schedule. The show is written, directed and choreographed by **Stuart Ross** and will run November 27 – December 26, 2010 in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre.

Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid continues the story of the singing group whose lives were lost in an accident involving a busload of teens en route to see "The Ed Sullivan Show." Encouraged by a heavenly phone call from Rosemary Clooney, the high-spirited boys of Forever Plaid – Frankie, Sparky, Jinx and Smudge – are transported from the ethereal cosmos to stage a nostalgic holiday extravaganza for world-weary mortals on Earth. Stuffed with such "Plaid-erized" Christmas standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," Plaid Tidings is one holiday treat that is truly heaven-sent.

Casting will be announced shortly. For more information to go www.theoldglobe.org.

The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way.

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GLOBE: The Old Globe to present PLAID TIDINGS

October 18, 2010

Entertainment Desk

"Plaid" Creator Stuart Ross directs the Special Engagement.

SAN DIEGO — Executive Producer Lou Spisto has announced that the Globe will present a special engagement of Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid. Written, directed and choreographed by Stuart Ross, the musical will run in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre Nov. 27 – Dec. 26. Previews run Nov. 27 – Dec. 1. Opening night is Dec. 2 at 7:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office.

Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid continues the story of the singing group whose lives were lost in an accident involving a busload of teens en route to see "The Ed Sullivan Show." Encouraged by a heavenly phone call from Rosemary Clooney, the high-spirited boys of Forever Plaid – Frankie, Sparky, Jinx and Smudge – are transported from the ethereal cosmos to stage a nostalgic holiday extravaganza for world-weary mortals on Earth. Stuffed with such "Plaid-erized" Christmas standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," Plaid Tidings is one holiday treat that is truly heaven-sent.

Forever Plaid was presented at The Old Globe in the summer of 1991 and became the must-have ticket of the season. Directed by Ross, the show proved such a success that, due to overwhelming popular demand, the production returned for a second two-month engagement the following November. For years afterwards, the Globe's costume facility created the show's unique Plaid jackets for revivals of Forever Plaid across the United States.

Running concurrently with Plaid Tidings is the Globe's 13th annual production of Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The long-running holiday evergreen has become a San Diego holiday tradition and has introduced thousands of children to the joy of live theater. This year's edition runs from Nov. 20 through Dec. 26. Plaid Tidings is the second holiday musical to be presented in the Globe's new Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre. The first was last season's hit revival of I Do! I Do! starring real-life married couple Patrick Page and Paige Davis.

Stuart Ross directed the original New York production of Forever Plaid and many of the long-running productions around the world. He also helmed Forever Plaid: The Movie, which is slated for release in the spring of 2011. At The Old Globe, Ross also directed Michael Cristofer's play Breaking Up and The Boswell Sisters (which he co-wrote for the Globe with Mark Hampton). He directed the critically acclaimed revival of Enter Laughing: The Musical (Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and Lucille Lortel Award nominations) last season in New York. At The Public Theater, he wrote the script and co-wrote the lyrics for the musical Radiant Baby, based on the life of artist Keith Haring. He directed a workshop production of his adaptation of Gilbert and Sullivan's The Gondoliers (co-written with Mark Hampton) at Roundabout Theatre Company. On Broadway, Ross co-wrote the book (with Barry Keating) of the Tony-nominated musical Starmites as well as The Radio City Music Hall Easter Show. Off Broadway he wrote A Leap of Faith (a one woman show for Faith Prince), The Heebie Jeebies, Not-So-New Faces, Tea with Bea and Fun with Dick and Jane: The Musical. His current projects include Standing on Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays opening this fall in Los Angeles, Old Jews Telling Jokes for Off Broadway and the Broadway transfer of Enter Laughing: The Musical.

TICKETS to Plaid Tidings can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Performances begin on Nov. 27 and continue through Dec. 26. Ticket prices start at \$35. Performance times: Previews: Saturday, Nov. 27 at 7:00 p.m., Sunday Nov. 28 at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 30 at 7:00 p.m. and Wednesday, Dec. 1 at 7:00 p.m. Regular Performances: Tues-Friday at 7:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. There will be no performances on


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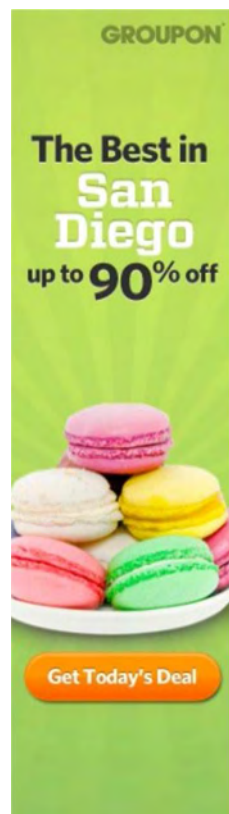
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Christmas.

The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit www.BalboaPark.org.

Brighton Beach Memoirs and Broadway Bound (9/14-11/7), Welcome to Arroyo's (9/25-10/31), The Winter's Tale (11/9-11/14), Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas! (11/20-12/26), Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid (11/27-12/26), Emma – A Musical Romantic Comedy (1/15-2/27), Death of a Salesman (1/22-2/27).

The Tony Award-winning Old Globe is one of the country's leading professional regional theaters and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 75 years. Under the direction of Executive Producer Louis G. Spisto, The Old Globe produces a year-round season of 15 productions of classic, contemporary and new works on its three Balboa Park stages: the 600-seat Old Globe Theatre, the 250-seat Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre and the 612-seat outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, home of its internationally renowned Shakespeare Festival. More than 250,000 people attend Globe productions annually and participate in the theater's education and community programs. Numerous world premieres such as The Full Monty, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, A Catered Affair, and the annual holiday musical Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! have been developed at The Old Globe and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs on Broadway and at regional theaters across the country.



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Tickets on Sale for the Old Globe's "Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid"

2010-10-18 · By [Mike Hausberg](#)

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Tickets are now available for The **Old Globe Theatre's** production of **"Forever Plaid – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid."**

"Plaid Tidings" continues the story of the singing group whose lives were lost in an accident involving a busload of teens en route to see "The Ed Sullivan Show." Encouraged by a heavenly phone call from Rosemary Clooney, the high-spirited boys of

Forever Plaid – Frankie, Sparky, Jinx and Smudge – are transported from the ethereal cosmos to stage a nostalgic holiday extravaganza for world-weary mortals on Earth. Stuffed with such "Plaid-erized" Christmas standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," Plaid Tidings is one holiday treat that is truly heaven-sent.

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Tickets can be purchased on [The Old Globe website](#), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office. Prices start at \$35.

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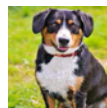
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BACKSTAGE: DEVO cancels Solana Beach concert following musician's hand injury

By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com North County Times - Californian | Posted: Wednesday, October 27, 2010 9:30 am
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DEVO, the '80s New Wave quintet that was scheduled to play an \$89 show on Nov. 10 at the Belly Up Tavern in Solana Beach, has canceled that gig and several others, after guitarist Bob Mothersbaugh suffered a serious hand injury Tuesday.

Warner Brothers Records announced Wednesday morning that Mothersbaugh cut his right thumb to the bone on a glass shard and needed emergency surgery. The group has canceled the Solana Beach concert, along with upcoming concerts at L.A.'s Club Nokia and San Francisco's Warfield Theater. All three dates will be rescheduled, mostly likely next spring.

DEVO will still appear Friday at MoogFest in Asheville, N.C. The group will receive the first-ever Moog Innovation Award from Moog Music. The award celebrates artists whose genre-defying work exemplifies the bold, innovative spirit of Bob Moog, creator of the synthesizer that bears his name.

North County's Valley View Casino will soon have a much higher profile.

Operators of the San Pasqual Indian tribe's Valley Center casino have purchased the naming rights for the San Diego Sports Arena, that beginning Monday will be officially known as the Valley View Casino Center. Just how long the arena will bear the Valley View name, and how much the San Pasqual tribe paid for the rights, was not disclosed, except that it is a "multiyear" agreement.

Also next month, the tribe will open a hotel adjacent to its casino property. On Nov. 19, the hotel (for ages 21 and up only) will debut, featuring 108 rooms, 96 deluxe rooms and 12 luxury suites.

The Old Globe is doubling up on its holiday-themed entertainment this fall. Besides presenting its 13th annual production of "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas" Nov. 20-Dec. 26, the Globe will also stage the musical "Plaid Tidings" Nov. 27-Dec. 26 in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre.

"Plaid Tidings" is a holiday version of Stuart Ross' long-running musical "Forever Plaid," which was first presented at the Old Globe in 1991.

If you like the new "Elephant Odyssey" exhibit at the San Diego Zoo, you're not alone. The \$45 million enclosure that opened at the Balboa Park zoo last spring has been honored in the category of Significant Achievement in Exhibit Design" by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

The 7.5-acre exhibit is home to more than 35 animal species and it traces the evolution of elephants and other species from the Pleistocene epoch (when woolly mammoths and saber-toothed tigers roamed the region) to today. The exhibit includes a 2.5-acre elephant habitat, a 137,000-gallon pool, rolling hills and a half-acre elephant care center.

The zoo's marketing department was also honored for its promotional efforts.

Kurt Swann, the longtime host of the monthly Carlsbad comedy show "West Coast Follies," recently took fourth place in the 35th annual San Francisco Comedy Competition, a contest that over the years that helped launch the careers of Ellen Degeneres, Dana Carvey, Dane Cook, Sinbad and Rob Schneider.

The annual contest draws hundreds of comedians from all over the country, from which 30 finalists are chosen. After performing 12 shows in 12 venues, the field was narrowed to five (including Swann) and in the final showdown, he finished fourth (the winner was Auggie Smith of Portland, Ore.).

Although he didn't win the top prize, Swann is in good company. Other finalists who also failed to finish on top include Robin Williams, Roseanne Barr, Bobcat Goldthwait, DL Hughley and Ellen Degeneres.

The San Diego Natural History Museum has debuted another water-themed nature film on its large-format screen, and once again it's the work of San Diego-based Summerhays Films.

San Diego filmmaker Soames Summerhays produced the new film "Turtle Reef 3D," which began screening Oct. 16 at the museum. The new film alternates daily with two other films, including "Ocean Oasis," which was also produced by Summerhays Films.

"Turtle Reef 3D" chronicles the interactions between the creatures on a coral reef in Hawaii during a 24-hour period. The 20-minute film is now screening three times a day at 11 a.m., 1:45 and 3:15 p.m.

"It is such a pleasure to once again have the opportunity of working with so many of our friends and colleagues at the (museum) in this project," Summerhays said in a statement. "This film will raise awareness about the magnificent forms of life, the intricate balance between them, and ultimately, the relationship we have with coral reefs."

Showtimes have been announced for the San Diego engagement of the "Radio City Christmas Spectacular," which plays Dec. 3 through 5 at the San Diego Sports Arena (which, as mentioned above, becomes the Valley View Casino Center next week).

The touring edition of the Rockettes' annual holiday show at Radio City Music Hall in Manhattan will be presented at 4 and 7 p.m. Dec. 3, 1, 4 and 7 p.m. Dec. 4, and 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Dec. 5. For tickets and other details, visit radiocitychristmas.com/nationaltour/.

Classic musicals and comedies and a world premiere musical are on tap for Lamb's Players Theatre's just-announced 2011 season.

The Coronado-based theater company's five-show season runs Feb. 4 through Nov. 20, 2011. Here's an overview:

"The Music Man" - Feb. 4-March 20. Meredith Willson's 1957 musical is the story of a rail-riding con man who meets his match in River City, Iowa.

"Steel Magnolias" - April 1-May 15. Robert Harling's popular drama is the story of four Southern women who share life's highs and lows at a Georgia beauty salon.

"Servant of Two Masters" - May 27-July 10. Former Lamb's staffer David McFadzean (creator of TV's "Home Improvement") returns with his world premiere musical adaptation of Carlo Goldoni's classic Italian comedy about mistaken identity and young love at a Venetian inn.

"Trying" - July 22-Sept. 4. First seen in 2006 at the Old Globe, Joanna McClelland Glass' drama is based on her real-life experiences as personal secretary to the elderly Judge Frances Biddle, who served both as U.S. attorney general to Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt during World War II and as presiding judge at the Nuremberg trials.

"The Book of the Dun Cow" - Oct. 7-Nov. 20. Lamb's staffers Kerry Meads, Robert Smyth and Deborah Gilmour Smyth first adapted Walter Wangerin's Newberry Award-winning children's story for the stage more than 20 years ago. It's the story of a group of barnyard animals, including Chauntecleer the Rooster, Mundo Canio Dog and the mysterious Dun Cow, who band together to fight the evil that has entered their world.

In addition to its regular season, the company announced it will also produce three non-subscription shows as an extra for

theatergoers, including a revival of C.S. Lewis's "Till We Have Faces (a retelling of the Psyche and Cupid myth) Sept. 9-25; and its annual "Festival of Christmas and "An American Christmas" productions.

Subscriptions are now on sale at lampsplayers.org or call 619-437-6000.

Pam Kragen is the entertainment editor of the North County Times.

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HOLIDAYS: Seasonal Theater Happenings

From The Nutcracker to The Grinch, San Diego offers year-end stage delights

by Robin Dohrn-Simpson

Posted on Mon, Dec 6th, 2010

Last updated Mon, Dec 6th, 2010

The Holiday season is in full swing. Treat yourself and your children to an experience you can all enjoy; live theater.



Plaid Tidings at The Old Globe.

Courtesy photo

San Diego is fortunate to have a stocking full of theater options. These productions will leave you smiling, whistling and tapping your toes. Here is a just a sample of holiday productions planned.

“A Taffeta Christmas”

Four talented ladies are featured on a weekly television show called “Hometown Hoedown” in Muncie Indiana in the 1950’s. Come hear your favorite holiday songs in this joint production between Onstage Playhouse and Pickwick Players.

Performances will be held both in Chula Vista, Onstage Playhouse on December 2- 5 and San Diego, Moxie Theater in the College area, on Dec. 10 – 12. For details see:

www.pickwickplayers.net (<http://www.pickwickplayers.net/>)

“An American Christmas”

Try something a little different at this five-course holiday dinner and show. Chef John Shelton and his talented culinary team will titillate your taste buds with a gourmet meal in the Hotel Del Coronado ballroom, while the talented cast will welcome you into the Marshall family’s home. Go back 100 years in time to experience a magical era in American Christmas traditions with music, dance and laughter. Lambs Players Theater (with the Hotel Del Coronado), Dec. 12- 26. For details see: www.lambsplayers.org (<http://www.lambsplayers.org/>)

“An Unscripted Carol”

If you enjoy unscripted theater this show is for you. Join the performers from the Improv Theater of Los Angeles as they work without script to create character, plot and staging all at once. The show will never be the same twice. You’ll see A Christmas Carol in a whole new light: improv. North Coast Repertory Theatre in Solana Beach, Dec. 20 – 21. For details see: www.northcoastrep.org (<http://www.northcoastrep.org/>)

“Big Band Christmas”

Set the time machine back to the 1940’s and gather around the wireless. Reminisce with favorite Christmas classics by Glenn Miller, Artie Shaw and Tommy Dorsey along with others on this sentimental journey. Welk Resorts Theatre in Escondido, through Dec. 31. For details see: www.welktheatersandiego.com (<http://www.welktheatersandiego.com/>)

Dave Koz and Friends: A Smooth Jazz Christmas 2010

Join Dave and friends at the newly remodeled Balboa Theatre adjacent to Horton Plaza. South African singer and guitarist Jonathan Butler, keyboardist Brian Culbertson, and saxophonist Candy Dulfer have prepared an evening of jazz celebration. This is an evening for all ages to enjoy. Civic Theater (at Balboa Theatre), Dec. 10. For details see: www.sdcivic.org (<http://www.sdcivic.org/>)

Dr. Seuss' "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!"

The Old Globe transforms itself into Whoville for this beloved production. Cindy-Lou Who will steal your heart just as she stole the Grinch's. People of all ages are welcome to enjoy the Grinch and Dr. Seuss' cast of characters. Old Globe Theatre, through Dec. 26. For details see: www.theoldglobe.org (<http://www.theoldglobe.org/>)

"Home for the Holidays"

Orchestra Nova, a new concept orchestra directed by Jung-ho Pak performs traditional Christmas music with the Center Chorale and the North Coast Singers. You must experience this new orchestra; it takes the classics to a new level. California Center for the Arts in Escondido, Dec. 19. For details see: www.artcenter.org (<http://www.artcenter.org/>)

"How do you spell Chanukah?"

Is it Hanukkah or Chanukah? Enjoy this Jewish alternative to the Holiday Fare with fun, music and storytelling. Oy! North Coast Repertory Theatre in Solana Beach, Dec. 3- 5. For details see: www.northcoastrep.org (<http://www.northcoastrep.org/>)

"It's a Wonderful Life!"

Try something really different. This lively radio-on-stage production is an adaptation of a Christmas film classic. The theater audience becomes studio guests in this story of love and redemption. Welk Resorts Theatre in Escondido, through Dec. 30. For details see: www.welktheatersandiego.com (<http://www.welktheatersandiego.com/>)

"Mistletoe, Music and Mayhem"

This holiday cabaret show features four performers with comedy scenarios mixed with holiday inspired songs. North Coast Repertory Theatre in Solana Beach, Dec. 16- 19. For details see: www.northcoastrep.org (<http://www.northcoastrep.org/>)

"Plaid Tidings- A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid"

Those lovable dorks are back from yesteryear for this holiday musical of hits from the '50s and '60s. Join the talented foursome as they dazzle you with Christmas music all wrapped up in plaid, proving you can never have too much plaid. Old Globe Theatre, through Dec. 26. For details see: www.theoldglobe.org (<http://www.theoldglobe.org/>)

"Sister's Christmas Catechism"

In this holiday mystery, Sister tackles the age old question "What happened to the Magi's gold?" North Coast Repertory Theatre in Solana Beach, Dec. 22. For details see: www.northcoastrep.org (<http://www.northcoastrep.org/>)

"The Nutcracker Ballet"

--Enter the world of fantasy with sugar plum fairies, gingerbread and tin soldiers, mice and nutcrackers. Your son or daughter may want to be a ballet dancer after seeing this famous work. Civic Theatre includes a Sugar Plum party after the show. Dec. 18-21. For details see: www.sdcivic.org (<http://www.sdcivic.org/>)



Erin Reiter

Theater is twice as nice at the Old Globe

December 11th, 2010 8:12 pm PT



Jason Heil, Leo Dagnault, David Brannen and Michael Winther in *Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid*

Photo: Henry DiRocco

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Only a few more weeks to see two holiday classics from the Old Globe; catch them before they're gone!

Plaid Tidings — A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid

Playing through December 26th

This heavenly and humorous quartet is back at the Old Globe and they are bringing their harmonic sound with them! Filled with renditions of musical hits from the '50s and '60s and Christmas standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," *Plaid Tidings* brings great music the Plaid way!

Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!

Playing through December 26th

It's that time of year again; when the Grinch makes an appearance you know that it's Christmas time! America's favorite holiday fable is back at the Old Globe for its 13th incredible year and true to the book it is a wonderful, whimsical production! Come take part in the fun as the Old Globe Theatre is transformed into the snow-covered Whoville right down to the last can of Who-hash!

For ticket information to both *Plaid Tidings — A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid* and *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* Click [here](#)

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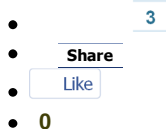
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San Diego's Holiday Theater Season 2010

by [Derek Smith](#) October 26, 2010

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Well, it's that time again: break out your Leg Lamps, Bundt Pans and Menorahs, San Dieg-ites. ChistmaHanaQuanzika is upon us!

Now as much as you love (hate) going to see that beautiful (three hour) production of The Nutcracker Ballet every year with the whole family (including but not limited to crying babies and texting teenagers), why don't you go see something anyone you invite will love? BELIEVE ME: This is coming from the kid who, at the age of 7, put on his own Nutcracker Ballet (complete with a cast of neighborhood kids, sound effects and printed programs) in his room. Even I, who once admittedly cried during the ever-so-moving Waltz of the Flowers, get sick of The Nutcracker Ballet.

Do yourself a favor and try out something new this year. San Diego's got plenty of theater picks this season and here's an easy breakdown for the most popular choices all over San Diego County.

NEW VILLAGE ARTS, Carlsbad

SHOW: *Santaland Diaries*

By David Sedaris, Adapted by Joe Mantello

Directed by Kristianne Kurner

WHAT: A hilarious one-man play (starring NVA's own Darren Scott) based on the award winning essay by David Sedaris about a 30-something man who's hired as an Elf for Macy's Santaland.

WHEN: December 2-22nd

TICKET INFO AVAILABLE [HERE](#)



A
CHRISTMAS CAROL
CHARLES DICKENS

SHOW: *A Christmas Carol*

By Charles Dickens

Newly Adapted by NVA's Rachel VanWormer and Brian Mackey

WHAT: The only *Christmas Carol* production in San Diego this year is a brand new adaptation that's workshopping as a part of [NVA's New Play Festival](#). Adapted to preserve the original words of Charles Dickens, this version celebrates the language from the original book by Mr. Dickens.

WHEN: November 26th-28th

TICKET INFO AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

CYGNET THEATRE, Old Town, San Diego

SHOW: *It's a Wonderful Life: A Radio Play*

By Joe Landry Directed by Sean Murray

WHAT: Presented for its 5th year, the famous story of George Bailey and Clarence the Angel is brought to life as a 1940's live radio play, filled with music, live sound effects and plenty of heart.

WHEN: November 26th-December 31st

TICKET INFO AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

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ONSTAGE PLAYHOUSE, Chula Vista and San Diego

SHOW: *A Taffeta Christmas*

By Rick Lewis Directed by John Fitzpatrick

WHAT: A 1950's Musical Review. It's the 1950's and the Dumont Television Network is featuring Kaye, Peggy, Cheryl and Donna on its weekly television show "Hometown Hoedown."

WHEN: December 2-12, theater location varies with date.

See details [HERE](#)

THE OLD GLOBE, Balboa Park, San Diego

SHOW: *Plaid Tidings: A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid*

Written, Directed and Choreographed by Stuart Ross

WHAT: Encouraged by a heavenly phone call from Rosemary Clooney, the high-spirited boys of Forever Plaid – Frankie, Sparky, Jinx and Smudge – are transported from the ethereal cosmos to stage a nostalgic holiday extravaganzas tuffed with such "Plaid-erized" Christmas standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas."

WHEN: November 27th-December 26th



SHOW: Dr. Seuss' *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*

Book and Lyrics by Timothy Mason, Music by Mel Marvin

Directed by James Vasquez

WHAT: Dr. Seuss' *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* is a wonderful, whimsical musical based upon the classic Dr. Seuss book. Back for its 13th incredible year, the family favorite features the songs "This Time of Year," "Santa for a Day" and "Fah Who Doraze," the delightful carol from the popular animated version of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!"

TICKET INFO FOR BOTH SHOWS AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY THEATER, Downtown San Diego

SHOW: Tradition of Christmas: A Musical Spectacular

WHAT: A celebration with high-kicking Rockette-style dancers, Santa and his workshop of elves, and a live Nativity Pageant.

WHEN: December 17th-23rd

TICKET INFO AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

LAMBS PLAYERS, Downtown San Diego

SHOW: Festival of Christmas

Written and Directed by Kerry Meads

WHAT: An energetic quartet getting their big break on a TV variety show is about to get an even bigger break as a blizzard shuts down New York and showbiz pandemonium ensues inside the studio.

WHEN: November 30th-December 30th

TICKET INFO AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

NORTH COAST REPERTORY THEATER, Solana Beach

WHAT: Five different holiday shows as a part of their "Off-Nights" series. Holiday shows include *How Do You Spell Chanukah?*, Jeffery Combs in *Nevermore*, *Mistletoe*, *Music and Mayhem*, *Dickens Unscripted*, and *Sister's Christmas Catechism*

MORE INFO [HERE](#)



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Intrepid Shakespeare Co.

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DRACULA at Coronado Playhouse



THE POWER OF THE TONGUE



STEEL MAGNOLIAS

BEHIND THE SCENES

with Jenni Prisk

Email Jenni



Column, November 4, 2010

Hello everyone, and happy November summer! It's hot, and so are our stages.

Theatre News

The Actors Alliance had a relatively small but very successful Annual Meeting this week. I have stepped down as Chair of the Board, and Marc Overton now takes over the role. The Alliance is forging a great relationship with the San Diego Performing Arts League that will bring great results I am sure.

Lamb's is delighted that miXtape is extended through December 19. This is a great show, now into its 4th month at the Horton Grand Theatre.

Alex Sandie of the San Diego Shakespeare Society would love you to attend Shakespeare Young Performers on November 15 at 7:30pm at The Neurosciences Institute, 10640 John Jay Hopkins Drive 92120.

And speaking of Shakespeare, Intrepid is bringing back their series of FREE staged readings, the first is on November 8 at 7:30pm at the Encinitas Library, 540 Cornish Drive. It's Betrayal, directed by Jason Heil with a great cast. Next up is November 22, Cymbeline and the final for this year is on December 12 - The Merchant of Venice - featuring Jonathan McMurtry as Shylock and Christy Yael as Portia.

Speaking of Jason Heil, he is about to start rehearsals for Forever Plaid at The Old Globe! Congratulations, Jason! (The show opens December 2.)

Speaking of The Globe, on December 6 at 7pm (one night only) you can laugh with a stellar lineup of stars at Celebrity Autobiography, where star memoirs are acted out live on stage...by other stars! 619-234-5623 for ticket information.

Gee's Bend closes at North Coast Repertory this coming Sunday (November 7). Next up, the Theatre School presents The Little Mermaid from November 18 - 21.

Moxie and Intrepid are underway with The Crucible on Moxie's stage at 6663 El Cajon Blvd. Based on the Salem Witch Trials of 1692, this searing production runs through December 5.

Anita Bryant Died for your Sins at Diversions, is getting great reviews. Shana Wride has directed this clever play by Brian Christopher Williams. Runs through November 21.

Perhaps The Old Globe's production of The Winter's Tale will bring some cooler weather when it opens at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre on November 7 and runs through 14th. This is a USD Graduate Theatre Production, directed by Ray Chambers.

La Jolla Playhouse opens Ruined by Lynn Nottage on November 21. This Pulitzer Prize-winner is directed by South African Liesl Tommy and is set in Republic of Congo; a story of the strength of the human spirit.

Leigh Scarritt has stepped into Storyville, The Musical, as Countess Willie. This heady musical opens on November 19 at the San Diego Repertory in Horton Plaza. Terrific cast, directed by Broadway Veteran Ken Page, this will jazz up your holidays!

OnStage Playhouse in Chula Vista is staging the one and only Rocky Horror Show from November 4-27. Midnight shows on Nov 6, 13 & 20. Love this extravaganza!

Visit www.NewVillageArts.org or phone 760-433-3245 to find out about the theatre's upcoming New Play Festival, opening with I Am the Machine Gunner on November 12. Picturing My Sister follows, then A Christmas Carol adapted by Rachel Van Wormer and Brian Mackey!

UCSD's Theatre and Dance Department runs Kasimir and Karoline on November 10, 12, 13, 18 and 20. Set in Germany's 1930s this play by Odon von Horvath parallels America in 2010. And Neil LaBute's Reasons to Be Pretty will be performed November 17-20 in the Arthur Wagner Theatre.

Lotus Theatre presents Sam Shepherd's savage and absorbing True West November 5 through 20 at 9pm (note that time!)



Jessica John directs Death Trap by Ira Levin at Scripps Ranch Theatre, opening in preview November 13. This play will let you scream a little, because it's good for you!

Cygnnet Theatre stages a mini-benefit on November 8, a concert reading of On the 20th Century. Call 619-337-1525 for ticket information. Music by Cy Coleman, the reading features Sean Murray, Eileen Bowman, Kerry Meads and Lance Arthur Smith. Wine and Cheese at 6:30pm, concert begins at 7:30pm.

Don't let anyone ever tell you that San Diego doesn't have theatre! We have some of the best in the country and the smaller companies particularly need our support. Please do what you can. I know times are tough, but it's one of the greatest ways to relax, unwind and be entertained at the same time. See you soon! Love, Jenni

jenni@prisk.com

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GRACE NOTES - Nov. 4, 2010

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Today's highlights:

* *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* opens on Broadway: <http://bit.ly/d87Kul>

* *The Memorandum* opens Off Broadway at TACT: <http://bit.ly/9soRra>

* *Imagining Heschel* (starring Richard Dreyfuss) begins previews at the Cherry Lane Theatre (opens Nov. 8): <http://bit.ly/abqW7R>

* *Venus Flytrap* begins a limited Off Broadway run (to Nov. 14) at the Workshop Theatre: <http://bit.ly/dvNlc1>

Closing this week:

* Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake* at [NY City Center](#).

* Off Broadway's *Critical Mass* at the [Lion Theatre](#).

* Off Broadway's *Office Hours* at the [Flea Theatre](#).

* *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the [Schimmel Center](#).

Upcoming Closings:

* *Mrs. Warren's Profession* – Nov. 21

* *The Pitmen Painters* – Dec. 12

* *Donny & Marie – A Broadway Christmas* – Dec. 19

* *West Side Story* – Jan. 2

* *Fela!* – Jan. 2

* *Promises, Promises* – Jan. 2

Fiddler on the Roof's composer **Jerry Bock** passed away Nov. 2 at the age of 81. This comes just one week after the passing of *Fiddler* bookwriter Joseph Stein.

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Video: Two Bock favorites –

* Barbara Cook sings "Vanilla Ice Cream": <http://bit.ly/bONYLp> and

* Barbara Harris sings "Movie Star" and "Gorgeous": <http://bit.ly/9NuWU5>

A longtime Pasadena subscriber to **A Noise Within** has come forward with a **\$1 million** matching grant that co-founder Geoff Elliott calls an "extraordinary" boost to completing the theater company's new \$13.3 million theater in East Pasadena. The individual wants to remain anonymous. [Full story](#)

MGM files for bankruptcy.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, once Hollywood's most powerful studio, has filed for bankruptcy protection after it could no longer pay down its crippling debt or make and release new movies.

The filing, made yesterday morning, comes after MGM's leading creditors struck a deal with corporate raider Carl Icahn, who had amassed nearly 20% of the company's debt and was previously pushing for a merger between MGM and Lions Gate. Instead, Icahn agreed to support a plan under which the chief executives of film production and finance company Spyglass Entertainment will run MGM once it exits Chapter 11 bankruptcy, which could occur as soon as one month.

Read the full LA Times story [here](#).

The Fortune Society, the not for profit organization that assists in issues of criminal justice and prisoner re-entry, will honor theatrical producer **Eric Krebs** at its annual **Fortune Society Benefit** on Nov. 15. The event will be held at the Laura Pels Theater, 111 West 46th Street. Krebs will receive the "Corporate Leader for Change Award" for his production of *The Castle*. **347-510-3683**

Tony Award-winner **Anika Noni Rose** (*Caroline, or Change*; *Dreamgirls*; *For Colored Girls*) joins the lineup of top theatrical talent who will pay tribute to playwright Lynn Nottage, recipient of the 2010 Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award, presented by The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust. Scenes highlighting Ms. Nottage's work will include *Ruined*, *Intimate Apparel* and a preview of her upcoming *By The Way, Meet Vera Stark*.

Ms. Rose joins previously announced actors Quincy Tyler Bernstine (*In the Next Room*), two-time Tony Award-winner and Oscar-nominee Viola Davis (*Fences*, *King Hedley II*), Kimberly Hébert Gregory (*The Brother/Sister Plays*), Russell Hornsby (*Intimate Apparel*), and Condola Rashad (*Ruined*). The 3rd Annual 'Mimi' Awards will be presented at a ceremony to be held Monday, Nov. 8 at the Vivian Beaumont Theater at Lincoln Center Theater (150 West 65th Street).

Four of musical theater's brightest talents offer behind-the-scenes tales and the magical music of a true legend in **Broadway Up Close and Personal: A Tribute to Cy Coleman**. Beloved songs from Cy Coleman's award-winning shows including *Sweet Charity*, *City of Angels* and *The Will Rogers Follies* and

songs such as "Witchcraft" and "The Best is Yet to Come" will be performed at the [Orange County Performing Arts Center](#) Dec. 9 – 12 in this heartfelt and personal tribute to the life and incredible work of this great American artist.

The show features Tony-winning lyricist David Zippel, Jason Graae, Jenifer Lewis and Tami Tappan Damiano.

The complete cast has been announced for [The Old Globe](#)'s special engagement of ***Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition*** of *Forever Plaid*. Written, directed and choreographed by Stuart Ross, the musical will run in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre Nov. 27 – Dec. 26. Previews run Nov. 27 – Dec. 1. Opening night is Dec. 2 at 7 PM.

The cast features David Brannen (Sparky), Leo Dagnault (Jinx), Jason Heil (Smudge) and Michael Winther (Frankie).

[Musical Theatre Guild](#) continues its season with ***Hello Again*** on Mon. Nov. 8 at 7:30 PM at the Alex Theatre in Glendale. With music, lyrics & book by Michael John LaChiusa, the concert version of the play based on *La Ronde* by Arthur Schnitzer, is directed and choreographed by Michele Spears.

The cast features Melissa Fahn, Cynthia Ferrer, Gordon Goodman, Michael G. Hawkins, Kim Huber, Lowe Taylor, Will Collyer, Rod Keller, Jake Wesley Stewart and Kevin Symons

Video: Clips from ***Women on the Verge...*** <http://bit.ly/bThQfO>

Emmy nominee **John Slattery** ("Mad Men") will star opposite **Cynthia Nixon** ("Sex and the City") in a Dec. 6 reading of the quirky comedy, ***Hate Mail***, to benefit [Opening Act](#), a nonprofit that provides free after-school theatre programs to New York City's most under-served public high schools. Nixon and Slattery starred in the 2006 Broadway play *Rabbit Hole*, for which Nixon won a Best Actress Tony Award. The reading will take place at 7 PM at New World Stages.

The [Mint Theatre](#) will stage Arnold Bennett's 1909 tabloid-inspired farce ***What the Public Wants*** as part of its 2011 season, which will also continue to explore the work of Irish playwright Teresa Deevy.

Matthew Arbour will stage Bennett's comedy, which will run Jan. 13-March 13. The Mint will also dust off Rachel Crothers' ***A Little Journey***, which has gone unproduced since 1918. The play, which was the first to be nominated for the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, will run May 5-July 3. In July, the Mint will continue the Deevy Project with the American premiere of the 1932 drama ***Temporal Powers***.

Kate Baldwin and Dick Scanlan will join Maureen Moore, Nellie McKay and Jane Kaczmarek for the American Songbook Project's Nov. 6 ***Name That Tune***

costume party at the Edison Ballroom.

Presented as a fundraiser for the American Songbook Project's mission to bring musical performances to city schools, the 7 PM event will celebrate the career of American singer Margaret Whiting. Also honored will be Tony Award-winning director Michael Mayer (*American Idiot*, *Spring Awakening*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*).

Name That Tune encourages guests to attend dressed in costumes designed after a song title. Attendees may participate in a fashion show to win prizes. An auction will also take place that includes such items as a private concert with Brooke Shields and John McDaniel in an apartment overlooking Lincoln Center. Information and tickets: <http://bit.ly/aAKDo1>

Judging the costumes will be Tony Award-winning costume designer William Ivey Long; NY 1 Theatre correspondent Frank DiLella; Jujamcyn president Jordan Roth; casting director Tara Rubin; jazz vocalist Hilary Kole; TimeOutNY theatre critic Adam Feldman; and arts patron Frank Skillern.

Video: Just for fun -- The Times Square EarthCam (live): <http://bit.ly/bBLmlp>

Cady Huffman, Orfeh, and Kate Pazakis are scheduled to perform at a special **one-night only benefit** to be held on Sunday, Nov. 14 at 7:30 PM at the Helen Mills Theater. The event will raise money for [Gilda's Club](#) New York City, which offers free support for people living with cancer - men, women, teens and children - along with their families and friends.

Also scheduled to perform are Jill Bernard who will offer her one-woman improvised musical; and Generation G, an all-female improv troupe, which features Bernard, along with Tara Copeland, Jess Elaina Eason, Colleen McHugh, Desiree Nash, and Ashley Ward. Additional casting for the event will be announced shortly.

[New York City Opera](#)'s fall concert ***Lucky to Be Me: The Vocal Music of Leonard Bernstein*** will take place on Saturday, Nov. 6 at 8 PM and Sunday, Nov. 7 at 1:30 PM at the David W. Koch Theater at Lincoln Center. The concert will be conducted by George Manahan and directed by Ted Sperling. Choreography will be by Peggy Hickey.

The show's cast will include Victoria Clark, Cheyenne Jackson, Christine Ebersole, Kelli O'Hara, Donna Murphy, Michael Cerveris, Darius de Haas, Michael Urie, Sara Jakubiak, Patricia Risley, Talise Trevigne, Dominic Armstrong, Christopher Feigum, Joshua Hopkins, Joshua Jeremiah, and Sidney Outlaw.

The concert will include music from *Mass*, *Songfest*, *Wonderful Town*, *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*, *On the Town*, and *West Side Story*, among others.

Michael Jackson The Immortal World Tour, the newest touring production from Cirque du Soleil, will launch with an engagement at the Bell Centre in Montreal, running next Oct.2-3. Jamie King will write and direct the piece. michaeljackson.com/us/home

The show is scheduled to play New York's Madison Square Garden on April 3, 2012; additional tour stops will include Ottawa, Hamilton, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver, Quebec, Detroit, Seattle, Portland, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, Denver, Sacramento, San Jose, Oakland, San Diego, Anaheim, Los Angeles, Houston, Miami, Philadelphia, and Atlanta.

Brian Stokes Mitchell will narrate The New York Pops' concert adaptation of Dr. Seuss' ***How The Grinch Stole Christmas!***, to be presented at [Carnegie Hall](#) on Saturday, Dec. 11 at 2 PM.

The program will feature Mitchell Kilby as The Grinch, Elena Zahlmann as Max the Dog, and Izzy Hanson-Johnston as Cindy Lou Who. In addition, Essential Voices USA, under the direction of Judith Clurman, children from New York Theatre Ballet and singers and dancers of Camp Broadway Chorus will also perform in this family concert.

Video: A shirtless **Cheyenne Jackson** gets sexy for *Out* Magazine:
<http://bit.ly/98eaCe>

Kelsey Grammer and Douglas Hodge -- who star in the Tony-winning Broadway revival of *La Cage Aux Folles* at the Longacre Theatre -- will sign copies of the show's new Broadway Cast Recording from PS Classics at Lord & Taylor's flagship store (424 Fifth Avenue), on Thursday, Nov. 4 from 12:30 - 1:30 PM.

Lord & Taylor customers will receive a complimentary copy of the CD with a \$50 cosmetic or fragrance purchase; a La Cage-inspired Holiday Collection Makeup Palette with a \$75 purchase; and two complimentary tickets with any \$300 purchase. All items are subject to availability.

Got a question for *American Idiot*'s **John Gallagher**? Ask it by Nov. 19 (answers will be posted by Dec. 3): <http://bit.ly/ak8JO6>

The upcoming Broadway production of ***The Merchant of Venice***, a transfer from the Public Theater's Shakespeare in the Park starring Al Pacino as Shylock, has **postponed its official opening night**.

Lily Rabe, who stars as Portia, "will be out of the show for the next several performances for personal family reasons," according to a Public Theater press representative. Rabe's understudy Kim Martin-Cotten will step in, but the show is delaying its scheduled Nov. 7 opening at the Broadhurst Theatre. A new opening date has not been announced.

British musical theater star Julian Ovenden is poised to star in an off-Broadway production of Maury Yeston and Thomas Meehan's long-brewing musical ***Death Takes a Holiday***, directed by Doug Hughes. No further information is available at this time.

[Amas Musical Theatre](#) has announced the cast accompanying *Forbidden Broadway*'s Gerard Alessandrini in the launch of the "**The Amas Musical Theatre Song Salon**". They include several Broadway and *Forbidden Broadway* veterans including: Cristina Bianco (2009 Drama Desk Nominee for Best Supporting Actress in a Musical-*Forbidden Broadway: Goes to Rehab*), Donna English (*Lend Me A Tenor*, *Forbidden Broadway SVU: Special Victims Unit*), Gina Kreiezmar (several *Forbidden Broadways*), and Kevin B. McGlynn (National tours of *Kiss Me Kate*, *All Shook Up* and several *Forbidden Broadways*).

This first Salon event will be held on Monday, Nov. 15. Complimentary cocktails and hors d'oeuvres will be served at 6 PM and the program will begin at 7 PM, at a private midtown Manhattan residence.

Take Me Out has been extended to Nov. 19 at LA's [Celebration Theatre](#) (the proud recipient of four 2010 Ovation nominations for *Women of Brewster Place*). Directed by Michael Matthews, the cast features Rick Cosnett, Tom Costello, Delarosa, Dustin "Duke" Dlouhy, Eiji Inoue, Ary Katz, Garrett Matheson, Thomas James O'Leary, Jacques C. Smith, Biff Yeager and Marco Antonio Garcia.

A.R. Gurney talks about writing *Office Hours*: <http://bit.ly/9JfNLr>

The world premiere of *Caught* will play the Zephyr Theatre in Los Angeles Nov. 27-Jan. 23, with an opening night of Dec. 3. The new play, by David L. Ray, will be directed by Nick DeGruccio. caughttheplay.com/

Caught, a contemporary play which examines the debate over same-sex marriage, features Will Beinbrink, Corey Brill, Richard Jenik, Amanda Kaschak, Micah McCain and Deborah Puette.

Joan Allen will make her television series debut in a multi-episode arc of the new HBO series, "**Luck**." The series stars Dustin Hoffman, and is an inside look into the world of horse racing.

Allen will reportedly play a woman who runs a program that utilizes inmates to take care of broken-down racehorses. The series is also set to feature Kerry Condon, Ritchie Coster, Kevin Dunn, Dennis Farina, Jason Gedrick, Ian Hart, Jill Hennessy, Richard Kind, Nick Nolte, John Ortiz, Tom Payne and Gary Stevens.

Kristin Chenoweth has been inducted in the Oklahoma Hall of Fame.

Tyler Perry, Janet Jackson, Phylicia Rashad, Anika Noni Rose, Kerry Washington, and Loretta Devine discuss the new film "**For Colored Girls**": <http://bit.ly/b1JbqY>

[East West Players](#) continues its 45th Anniversary season with Beth Henley's Pulitzer Prize-winning play ***Crimes of the Heart***, directed by Leslie Ishii. The cast features Maya Erskine, Kimiko Gelman, Elizabeth Liang, Hiwa Bourne, Tim Chiou, and Jason Sino. The show runs Nov. 4 - Dec. 5, with an opening night of Nov. 10 (and a pay-what-you-can performance on Nov. 24).

Posted by Susan Grace at [6:55 AM](#) 

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theater

THERE'S NO ESCAPING the holidays at the theater this month: The **Grinch** returns reliably to the Globe, which also has *Forever Plaid*'s holiday show **Plaid Tidings** (both through Dec. 26). But you never know what to expect at Lamb's Players' **Festival of Christmas**, which presents a different, original Christmas play each year; and for the fifth consecutive year, Cygnet reimagines Capra's **It's a Wonderful Life** as a live radio play. Craving a break from holiday fare? Lynn Nottage's Pulitzer-winning **Ruined** is at the Playhouse through Dec. 19, and the sultry, New Orleans musical **Storyville** is at S.D. Rep till Dec. 12. And, oh, to be among the lucky few holding a ticket to the Globe's one-night-only **Celebrity Autobiography: In Their Own Words** (Dec. 6). Special guests John Goodman, Marion Ross and Kathy Najimy will read from the memoirs of stars ranging from Suzanne Somers to Liz Taylor.



John Goodman in the Globe's *Celebrity Autobiography*



City Ballet's *Nutcracker*

dance

'TIS THE SEASON to throw open the doors to Fritz, Clara, the Sugar Plum Fairy and all the rest: Yes, it's **Nutcracker** time again, and there's no shortage of ballet companies performing Tchaikovsky's holiday classic around town this month. San Diego Ballet celebrates its 20th year of dancing the show with a cast of 100 dancers and performances spread over two weekends at two locations (Dec. 4-5 at the Birch Theatre in North Park, accompanied by the Grossmont Symphony, and Dec. 16-17 at Mandeville Auditorium at UCSD). Dec. 17 and 18, West Coast Ballet Theatre promises a cast of 200 for its family-oriented performances at California Center for the Arts, Escondido, plus accompaniment by the San Diego Civic Youth Orchestra. City Ballet stages its version Dec. 10-12 and 17-19 at the Spreckels Theatre downtown; the Saturday matinees will also feature an optional pre-show luncheon for kids and adults, complete with tableside visits from *Nutcracker* characters.

Curtain Calls

By Charlene Baldrige

Week ending December 2

Brenda in THE BASEMENT

Brenda's amazing encounters

Standing outside the White Theatre on the opening night of GRINCH was **Stuart Ross**, the creator of *Forever Plaid*, here to stage Old Globe production of his holiday work, *Plaid Tidings* (opened December 2). "Hello, Charlene," he said. I don't believe I have seen Stuart since *Forever Plaid* opened at the Theatre in Old Town. Impressive memory.

**Adam Pollack**

The style of Christmas branches, flowers and verses

December 11th, 2010 11:37 am PT



An entry sign and decked post at Old Town State Historic Park in San Diego.

Photo: Adam Benjamin

Slideshow: Dressed for greetings and cheerful work



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Shop owners in [Old Town State Park](#) are ready for Christmas times. The players at the blues houses in the Gaslamp Quarter who put on a stage show, for free, celebrate the cold days for doing good after they fly by night.

The scenes are filled with seasonal rituals carried out in a colorful style. Wreaths placed on entryways and doors welcome the walking San Diegans into courses through ornament shops and flower gardens, decked in red, white, and green.

Last night, Blue Christmas came to a variety of restaurants in the Gaslamp Quarter on 5th and 4th Avenues. Late in the afternoon, Croce's Restaurant at 802 5th Avenue was lit in lively gold, the pedestrians passing before the stage was set and the band began the excitement of the show. Down the street and to the West, at 345 4th Avenue, guitar verses played out in the street, the harmonies, for a brief time of passing by Dick's Last Resort, going another round. At dusk, the street glowed with the many telling shades and points of light that stream out the Hard Rock Cafe windows at 801.

The red-nosed reindeer, Rudolph, was flying in the air at [Balboa Park](#), surrounded by the museums, gardens, and a

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4. Pictures from the Gulf Coast oil spill disaster

Most commented articles

1. The Smithsonian cave-in to gay-bashing censorship
2. Obama continues to lose support
3. Kelly vs. Weiner: Fox News Upholds Myth of Oppressed Wealthy
4. Let's concentrate on Palin's humanitarianism, not her hair

pavilion that opened the season on December Nights, the 3rd and the 4th. North of Santa's sleigh and reindeer, the wood lath Botanical Garden building, inside, warms the potted poinsettias that will sit in joyful round arrangements, both red and white, and hang on girded posts wrapping the simple wood support in red bunches, on display though January.

Defiant, and unmoved, the Grinch hangs on the front of the Old Globe theater. He lays in wait for another set of shows, today and tomorrow, tempered at 2 pm by a performance of *Plaid Tidings* next door.

Out in the plaza, the dark green branches in the Christmas Tree designed by Grinch scenic designer John Lee Beatty poke out in plenty from the snow white cover, between the rose red and pink ribbons and wreaths.

In Old Town, its Holiday in the Park. A faithful Christmas shopper can lay their hands on elegant lights and comely molded dolls, elsewhere not seen. Shops are open until 9 pm Saturday and Sunday.

The cast of *It's A Wonderful Life* stage radio show rests after an 8 pm holiday round last night. The production goes on again until December 31.

Carrying the leading strings, the city's symphony players prepare for Holiday Pops at Copley Symphony Hall the night of December 17th. Chorales and choirs and bells will stand up and ring in an instant. The sounds of creativity at work, festive and warm hearted, will change the sense for drama in the lamp lit downtown to a traditional palmy.

To read earlier articles in Saturday City Scene Chronicles, read

[Developed buildings decked with seasonal decorations and lights](#)

[Work in the turning fall shades at Mission Trails](#)

[Living Christmas trees appear with ready branches](#)

[Walking on a street named Martin Luther King Jr. Way](#)

[A season for tidying up the Tijuana River Valley](#)



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A LANDSCAPE OF ART and CULTURE

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[All Events](#) | [After Dark](#) | [Just for Kids](#) | [December Nights](#)

[Home](#) » [Calendar](#) » Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid

PLAID TIDINGS - A SPECIAL HOLIDAY EDITION OF FOREVER PLAID

Nov 27, 10 thru Dec 26, 10

Plaid Tidings - A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid continues the story of the singing group whose lives were lost in an accident involving a busload of teens en route to see "The Ed Sullivan Show". Encourage by a heavenly phone call from Rosemary Clooney, the high-spirited boys of Forever Plaid are transported from the ethereal cosmos to stage a nostalgic holiday extravaganze for world-weary mortals on earth.



Tues. - Sun. No performance on Christmas Day, December 25th

Information

The Old Globe

Hours: Performances: Sun. Tue. Wed. 7:00 p.m.

Thu. Fri. Sat. 8:00 p.m.

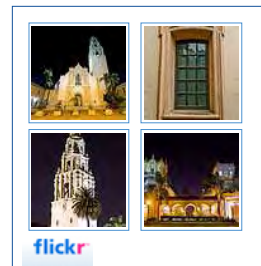
Sat. and Sun. 2:00 p.m. (except Shakespeare Festival productions in the outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, which are Tue.-Sun. at 8:00 p.m.)

Box Office: Open Tues-Sun. at noon. Closes at last curtain Closed some holidays

Contact: (619) 23-GLOBE

<http://www.TheOldGlobe.org>

[Map to Park Location 6](#)



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NORTH COUNTY TIMES

October 28, 2010

PREVIEW SECTION

BACKSTAGE



PAM KRAGEN

The Old Globe is doubling up on its holiday-themed entertainment this fall. Besides presenting its 13th annual production of **"Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas"** Nov. 20-Dec. 26, the Globe will also stage the musical **"Plaid Tidings"** Nov. 27-Dec. 26 in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre.

"Plaid Tidings" is a holiday version of Start Ross' long-running musical "Forever Plaid," which was first presented at the Old Globe in 1991.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

November 28, 2010

Openings

Plaid Tidings Stuart Ross directs his holiday revision of the hit musical "Forever Plaid," about a 1950s singing group that returns from the dead for a big gig packed with Christmas standards, including "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas." With David Brannen, Leo Daig-nault, Jason Heil and Michael Winth-er. The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Thu.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Sat.-next Sun., 2 and 7 p.m.; ends Dec. 26. \$35-\$67. (619) 234-5623.

SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

December 2, 2010 NIGHT + DAY

BACKSTAGE PASS

Holiday theater openings this week

"The Santaland Diaries"

at New Village Arts Theatre, through Dec. 24. NVA brings back its popular staging of the David Sedaris solo comedy, starring Daren Scott. (760) 433-3245 or newvillagearts.org

"Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid"

at Old Globe's White Theatre, through Dec. 26. The show taps the long-running "Plaid" franchise. (619) 234-5623 or theoldglobe.org

"It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play"

at Cygnet Theatre, through Dec. 31. The ode to the classic movie about the humbly heroic George Bailey was adapted as a radio play by Joe Landry. (619) 337-1525 or cygnettheatre.com

"How Do You Spell Chanukah?" at North Coast Repertory Theatre, Friday through Dec. 5. A theatrical stocking stuffer. (858) 481-1055 or northcoastrep.org

"The Messiah" at Community Actors Theatre, Friday through Dec. 19. The popular, music-infused production returns with its story about the birth of Christ. (619) 264-3391 or communityactorstheatre.com

"Santa Claus Is Coming Out" at Diversionary Theatre, Saturday through Dec. 21. A special engagement of Jeffrey Solomon's solo mockumentary. (619) 220-0097 or diversionary.org

NORTH COUNTY TIMES

November 28, 2010

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY, DEC. 2

“PLAID TIDINGS” OPENS – The Old Globe presents a holiday sequel to Stuart Ross’ long-running comedy “Forever Plaid,” the story of a 1960s-era men’s vocal harmony quartet resurrected from the dead for one last show; 7 p.m. (also 7 p.m. Friday; 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday and Dec. 5); runs through Dec. 26; Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, The Old Globe, Balboa Park, San Diego; tickets start at \$35; 619-234-5623 or theoldglobe.org.

SAN DIEGO READER

December 10, 2010

CALENDAR

Calendar THEATER

THEATER LISTINGS

Dr. Seuss's *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*

The Old Globe Theatre stages its traditional holiday show, in which a green meanie threatens festivities in Whoville. James Vasquez directed.

OLD GLOBE THEATRE, 1363 OLD GLOBE WAY, BALBOA PARK. 619-234-5623.

7PM THURSDAYS & FRIDAYS, 11AM, 2PM & 5PM SATURDAYS, 11AM, 2PM & 5PM SUNDAYS, 7PM TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS, THROUGH DECEMBER 26.



Green meanie Mr. Grinch threatens Christmas at the Globe.

Plaid Tidings

"A Plaid's gotta do what a Plaid's gotta do." In this case, come back to life during the holidays and figure out why they've come back. Okay, the frame tale isn't much, but performances by Leo Daignault, David Brannen, Michael Winther, and especially Jason Heil (allowed to showcase his versatility) make for an always entertaining evening. And for a group of admittedly virginal males, who were "semi-pro" singers at best, the vocals and arrangements (often "hybrid" songs) are quite sophisticated.

Worth a try:

SHERYL AND HARVEY WHITE THEATRE, 1363 OLD GLOBE WAY, BALBOA PARK. 619-234-5623. 7PM THURSDAYS & FRIDAYS, 2PM & 7PM SATURDAYS, 7PM SUNDAYS, TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS, THROUGH DECEMBER 26.



The boys are back in *Plaid Tidings* at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre in Balboa Park.

APPLAUSE

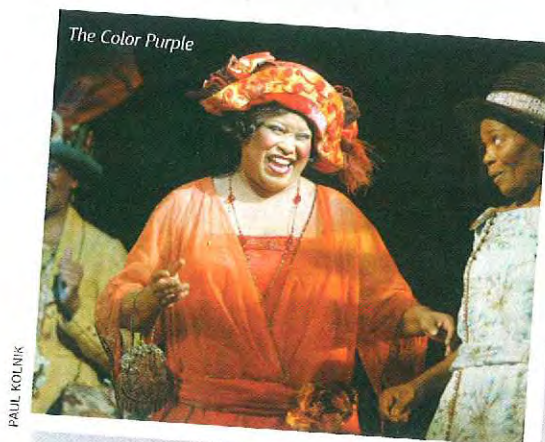
BY PHYLLIS DeBLANCHE

PLAYING AROUND

Holly Days: *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* turns the Old Globe green through Dec. 26 (619-234-5623, theoldglobe.org), with *Plaid Tidings* dashing into the White Theatre Nov. 27–Dec. 26. Lamb's celebrates with *It's Christmas and It's Live!* on the company's stage Nov. 30–Dec. 30 and *An American Christmas* settling in at Hotel del Coronado Dec. 12–26 (619-437-0600, lambplayers.org). Angels get down to Earth in *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, at Cygnet Nov. 26–Dec. 31 (619-337-1525, cygnettheatre.com) and Welk Resorts Theatre through Jan. 2, alternating with *A Big Band Christmas* (888-802-SHOW, welktheatresandiego.com). At New Village Arts, delightfully sardonic *The Santaland Diaries* offers an antidote to sugary holiday shows, Dec. 2–24 (760-433-3245, newvillagearts.org). Diversionary's *Santa Claus Is Coming Out* plays Dec. 4–21 (619-220-0097, diversionary.org).

Big Bag o' Gifts: North Coast Repertory proffers five shows this month: *How Do You Spell Chanukkah?*, Dec. 3–5; *Nevermore: An Evening with Edgar Allan Poe*, Dec. 9–12; *Mistletoe, Music and Mayhem*, Dec. 16–19; *An Unscripted Carol*, Dec. 20 & 21; *Sister's Christmas Catechism*, Dec. 22–24 (858-481-1055, northcoastrep.org).

Shades of Love: Broadway/San Diego turns the Civic Theatre *The Color Purple* Dec. 3–5 (619-570-1100, broadwaysd.com).



PAUL KOLNIK

Brawling in N'awlins:

The San Diego Rep's lively *Storyville* tells its jazzy tale through Dec. 12 (619-544-1000, sdrep.org).

Congo Lines: Pulitzer-winning *Ruined* delves into the fate of women during war in the Congo, at La Jolla Playhouse through Dec. 19 (858-550-1010, lajollaplayhouse.org).

Back to the '80s: In the Gaslamp, Lamb's Players' hit *miXtape* has been extended through Dec. 19 (619-437-0600, lambplayers.org).

Holiday theater of many stripes

The roundup includes such classics as 'A Christmas Carol' and a few surprises.

SHAYNA SOBOL

The holidays are a time to reconnect with the familiar, time-honored characters of the season — Scrooge and the Ghost of Christmas Past, Santa and Rudolph, and David Sedaris' elf. Oh yeah, and Billy Joel. Whether you like musicals or drama or variety spectacles, L.A. is in tune with the great stories that endure, and there is no shortage of holiday theater productions for the whole family.

Plaid Tidings

Stuart Ross directs his holiday revision of the hit musical "Forever Plaid," about a 1950s singing group that returns from the dead for a big gig packed with Christmas standards, including "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas." The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Dec. 2-26. \$35-\$67. (619) 234-5623. www.theoldglobe.org

Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!

James Vasquez directs this 13th annual production of Timothy Mason and Mel Marvin's whimsical holiday musical fable based on the classic Dr. Seuss book. Jeff Skowron heads the cast as the Grinch. The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Nov. 26-Dec. 26. \$39-\$77. (619) 234-5623. www.theoldglobe.org

San Diego's Holiday Theater Season 2010

by [Derek Smith](#) October 26, 2010

[San Diego Family](#) [San Diego Holiday](#) [San Diego Theater](#)

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Well, it's that time again: break out your Leg Lamps, Bundt Pans and Menorahs, San Dieg-ites. ChistmaHanaQuanzika is upon us!

Now as much as you love (hate) going to see that beautiful (three hour) production of The Nutcracker Ballet every year with the whole family (including but not limited to crying babies and texting teenagers), why don't you go see something anyone you invite will love? BELIEVE ME: This is coming from the kid who, at the age of 7, put on his own Nutcracker Ballet (complete with a cast of neighborhood kids, sound effects and printed programs) in his room. Even I, who once admittedly cried during the ever-so-moving Waltz of the Flowers, get sick of The Nutcracker Ballet.

Do yourself a favor and try out something new this year. San Diego's got plenty of theater picks this season and here's an easy breakdown for the most popular choices all over San Diego County.

NEW VILLAGE ARTS, Carlsbad

SHOW: *Santaland Diaries*

By David Sedaris, Adapted by Joe Mantello

Directed by Kristianne Kurner

WHAT: A hilarious one-man play (starring NVA's own Darren Scott) based on the award winning essay by David Sedaris about a 30-something man who's hired as an Elf for Macy's Santaland.

WHEN: December 2-22nd

TICKET INFO AVAILABLE [HERE](#)



A
CHRISTMAS CAROL
CHARLES DICKENS

SHOW: *A Christmas Carol*

By Charles Dickens

Newly Adapted by NVA's Rachel VanWormer and Brian Mackey

WHAT: The only *Christmas Carol* production in San Diego this year is a brand new adaptation that's workshopping as a part of [NVA's New Play Festival](#). Adapted to preserve the original words of Charles Dickens, this version celebrates the language from the original book by Mr. Dickens.

WHEN: November 26th-28th

TICKET INFO AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

CYGNET THEATRE, Old Town, San Diego

SHOW: *It's a Wonderful Life: A Radio Play*

By Joe Landry Directed by Sean Murray

WHAT: Presented for its 5th year, the famous story of George Bailey and Clarence the Angel is brought to life as a 1940's live radio play, filled with music, live sound effects and plenty of heart.

WHEN: November 26th-December 31st

TICKET INFO AVAILABLE [HERE](#)



ONSTAGE PLAYHOUSE, Chula Vista and San Diego

SHOW: *A Taffeta Christmas*

By Rick Lewis Directed by John Fitzpatrick

WHAT: A 1950's Musical Review. It's the 1950's and the Dumont Television Network is featuring Kaye, Peggy, Cheryl and Donna on its weekly television show "Hometown Hoedown."

WHEN: December 2-12, theater location varies with date.

See details [HERE](#)

THE OLD GLOBE, Balboa Park, San Diego

SHOW: *Plaid Tidings: A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid*

Written, Directed and Choreographed by Stuart Ross

WHAT: Encouraged by a heavenly phone call from Rosemary Clooney, the high-spirited boys of Forever Plaid – Frankie, Sparky, Jinx and Smudge – are transported from the ethereal cosmos to stage a nostalgic holiday extravaganza tuffed with such "Plaid-erized" Christmas standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas."

WHEN: November 27th-December 26th



SHOW: Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas

Book and Lyrics by Timothy Mason, Music by Mel Marvin

Directed by James Vasquez

WHAT: Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! is a wonderful, whimsical musical based upon the classic Dr. Seuss book. Back for its 13th incredible year, the family favorite features the songs "This Time of Year," "Santa for a Day" and "Fah Who Doraze," the delightful carol from the popular animated version of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!"

TICKET INFO FOR BOTH SHOWS AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY THEATER, Downtown San Diego

SHOW: Tradition of Christmas: A Musical Spectacular

WHAT: A celebration with high-kicking Rockette-style dancers, Santa and his workshop of elves, and a live Nativity Pageant.

WHEN: December 17th-23rd

TICKET INFO AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

LAMBS PLAYERS, Downtown San Diego

SHOW: Festival of Christmas

Written and Directed by Kerry Meads

WHAT: An energetic quartet getting their big break on a TV variety show is about to get an even bigger break as a blizzard shuts down New York and showbiz pandemonium ensues inside the studio.

WHEN: November 30th-December 30th

TICKET INFO AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

NORTH COAST REPERTORY THEATER, Solana Beach

WHAT: Five different holiday shows as a part of their "Off-Nights" series. Holiday shows include *How Do You Spell Chanukah?*, Jeffery Combs in *Nevermore*, *Mistletoe*, *Music and Mayhem*, *Dickens Unscripted*, and *Sister's Christmas Catechism*

MORE INFO [HERE](#)



DIVERSIONARY THEATER, San Diego

SHOW: *Santa Claus is Coming Out*

Written and Performed by Jeffrey Solomon

Directed by Joe Brancato

WHAT: Jeffrey Solomon's solo mock-u-mentary about the outing of Santa Claus is an irreverent upending of the St. Nick myth.

WHEN: December 4-21st

TICKET INFO AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

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By [Derek Smith](#)

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San Diego's finest theater juice.

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- ['Broadway Bound' at the Old Globe MUST be Broadway Bound](#)
- [San Diego's Holiday Theater Season 2010](#)
- [Brighton Beach Memoirs is Alive at the Old Globe](#)
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SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN NEWS

December 2010

Live performances warm the season



THE LIVELY ARTS

Charlene Baldrige

December offers several culturally-warm special events, plus the usual holiday offerings, which have a separate space of their own this month.

At the Old Globe

The Old Globe has two holiday shows for the family this season. The 13th annual production of "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" features the return of actor Jeff Skowron as the hairy green guy; and Stuart Ross' "Plaid Tidings," in which the beloved Plaid quartet (Michael Winther, David Brannen, Jason Heil and Leo Daignault) returns to perform holiday favorites. Both productions play now through Dec. 26 at the Old Globe, Balboa Park. www.theoldglobe.org or (619) 23-GLOBE.

At Copley Symphony Hall

San Diego Symphony Jacobs' Master-

works Series presents Gustav Mahler's magnificent Symphony No. 2 in C minor ("Resurrection"), conducted by Jahja Ling and featuring soprano Janice Chandler Eteme, mezzo-soprano Susan Platts and the San Diego Master Chorale, 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Dec. 10-11; and 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 12, Copley Symphony Hall, Seventh and B streets. www.sandiegosymphony.org or (619) 235-0804.

At the Lyceum

San Diego Repertory Theatre presents Ed Bullins' "Storyville," a musical featuring 22 performers and a live band. With music and lyrics by Mildred Kayden, the work is set in early 1917 New Orleans and plays through Dec. 12 at the Lyceum, San Diego Repertory Theatre, 79 Horton Plaza. Schedule and tickets at www.sdrept.org or (619) 544-1000.

At Horton Grand Theatre

Lamb's Players Theatre has extended its hit musical revue "MiX-tape" once again. The extremely popular, not-to-be-missed show plays Wednesdays-Sundays through Dec. 19 at Horton Grand Theatre, 444 Fourth Ave. www.lambplayers.org or (619) 437-6000.



Jahja Ling will conduct the San Diego Symphony in Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 2 in C minor ("Resurrection"), featuring soprano Janice Chandler Eteme, mezzo-soprano Susan Platts and the San Diego Master Chorale at Copley Symphony Hall.

COURTESY PHOTO

LGBT WEEKLY

November 24, 2010



TUESDAY, NOV. 30

Plaid Tidings

Tuesday, Nov. 30

The Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre at the Old Globe presents *Plaid Tidings* — A Special Holiday Edition of *Forever Plaid* at 7:00 pm. Written and directed by

Stuart Ross, the hilarious, heavenly quartet is coming to The Old Globe to croon their tight swinging harmonic renditions of musical hits from the '50s and '60s. This nostalgic holiday extravaganza is the very best of *Forever Plaid* wrapped up in a nifty package with a big bow on top! Stuffed with such "Plaid-erized" Christmas standards like *Mr. Santa*, *Let It Snow* and *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*, *Plaid Tidings* is one holiday treat that is truly heaven sent. Tickets are \$35 - \$57. The theatre is located in Balboa Park, right off El Prado, between the San Diego Museum of Art and the Museum of Man. For more information call, (619) 23-GLOBE.

Home / Entertainment / Entertainment Events

Preview calendar: Theater and auditions for Dec. 16-22

- Story
- Discussion

Preview calendar: Theater and auditions for Dec. 16-22

North County Times North County Times - Californian | Posted: Wednesday, December 15, 2010 11:30 am | No Comments Posted | [Print](#)

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Press releases for arts and entertainment events and programs should be typed, double-spaced, with basic information about the event, performance dates and times, location, ticket prices and a public telephone number. Send notices two to three weeks before the event to Preview, 207 E. Pennsylvania Ave., Escondido, 92025, or via e-mail to preview@nctimes.com. Or fax items to (760) 745-3769.

THEATER

"An American Christmas" ---- Lamb's Players Theatre and the Hotel del Coronado host the 15th annual holiday dinner theater celebration; guests will dine on a five-course gourmet dinner in the hotel's Grand Ballroom while being entertained by more than two dozen members of a wealthy Coronado family, circa 1910; 6:30 p.m. daily through Dec. 26; Hotel del Coronado, 1500 Orange Avenue, Coronado; \$120-\$160, adults; \$95-\$125, children ages 5 to 12; 619-437-6000 or lambplayers.org.

"Annie" ---- Star Theatre presents its annual production of this musical based on the "Little Orphan Annie" comic strip; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 16-Dec. 18; 2 p.m. Dec. 18 and Dec. 19; Star Theatre, 402 N. Coast Highway, Oceanside; \$15, general; \$12, seniors, students, military; \$7, children under 12; 760-721-9983 or startheatre.biz.

"An Unscripted Carol" ---- North Coast Repertory Theatre presents Impro Theatre of Los Angeles' improvisational holiday play, created on the spot from audience suggestions; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 20 and Dec. 21; North Coast Repertory Theatre, 987D Lomas Santa Fe Drive, Solana Beach; \$15-\$20; 858-481-1055 or northcoastrep.org.

"Believe" ---- San Diego Pantomime Theatre presents Jerry Hager's sentimental slapstick holiday comedy, featuring Chaplinesque humor for the whole family; there will also be an opportunity to take photos with Santa Claus in the lobby for \$5; 2 p.m. Dec. 18; Sunshine Brooks Theater, 217 N. Coast Highway, Oceanside; \$12, general; \$6, children 12 and under; free for military families; 760-529-9140 or sunshinebrookstheatre.org.

"Big Band Christmas" ---- Welk Resorts Theatre presents a 1940s radio-style tribute to "the boys overseas" featuring a nine-piece big band playing classic Christmas tunes and 1940s swing music and songs; 8 p.m. Thursdays and Saturdays; 1 p.m. Fridays-Sundays; through Dec. 31; Welk Resorts Theatre, 8860 Lawrence Welk Drive, Escondido; \$54-\$68, show only; \$57-\$73, show and lunch or dinner buffet; 888-802-7469 or welktheatresandiego.com.

"Black Nativity, The Musical" ---- Common Ground Theatre presents Hassan El-Amin's adaptation of Langston Hughes' play, which combines the Nativity story with a gospel concert, and will feature guest performances by gospel choirs from all over the region; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 17 and Dec. 18; 3 p.m. Dec. 19; Educational Cultural Complex, 4343 Ocean View Blvd., San Diego; \$30, general; \$20, seniors and students; \$10, children under 12; 619-263-7911 or commongroundtheatre.org.

"Celebrate the Giving Season" ---- Write Out Loud presents a program of holiday storytelling featuring local actors reading works by A.A. Milne, Ruth Sawyer, Grace Paley, Sarah Marwill Lamstein and Bret Harte; 7 p.m. Dec. 20; Carlsbad City Library, 1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad; \$15, general; \$13, seniors; \$5, children ages 5 to 12; 619-297-8953.

- "Chalk It Up to Murder"** ---- Peggy Sue Productions presents this new "spaghetti Western" murder-mystery dinner theater production at Mikki's Restaurant; 5:30 p.m. Sundays; ticket-holder in the best costume wins a prize; Mikki's Restaurant, 1639 E. Valley Parkway, Escondido; \$32-\$35 (includes three-course dinner and show); 760-489-2496 or www.peggysueanddinnertoo.com.
- "A Christmas Carol"** ---- Julian Stage Company and the Julian Chamber of Commerce present the town's annual production of Charles Dickens' story about the Victorian-era miser Ebenezer Scrooge, who discovers the holiday spirit when he's visited one night by the ghosts of Christmases past, present and future; 7 p.m. Dec. 16-Dec. 18; 1:30 p.m. Dec. 18 and Dec. 19; Julian Town Hall, 2129 Main St., Julian; \$10, adults; \$5, children 12 and under; 760-765-3789.
- "A Christmas Carol"** ---- South Coast Repertory presents Hal Landon Jr. its 31st annual production of Jerry Patch's stage adaptation of Charles Dickens' story about the Victorian-era miser Ebenezer Scrooge, who discovers the holiday spirit when he's visited one night by the ghosts of Christmases past, present and future; 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays-Saturdays; 2:30 p.m. Saturdays; noon and 4 p.m. Sundays; through Dec. 26; Folino Theatre, South Coast Repertory, 655 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa; \$25-\$41, previews; \$35-\$60, regular shows; 714-708-5555 or scr.org.
- "A Christmas Story"** ---- Premiere Productions' Annual Holiday Theater Festival presents this beloved comedy about a little boy who dreams of getting a BB gun for Christmas; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 19; Avo Playhouse, 303 Main St., Vista; \$13, general; \$11, seniors, students and military; \$8, children 12 and under; 760-724-2110 or vistix.com.
- "Comedy & Magic"** ---- Family-friendly evening of stand-up comedy and magic tricks featuring master ventriloquist/comedian Kevin Johnson and Anthony "Anthony the Magic" Hernandez; 7 p.m. Wednesdays; Welk Resorts Theatre, Welk Resorts San Diego, 8860 Lawrence Welk Drive, Escondido; \$25, adults; \$10, children; 760-749-3448 or welktheatresandiego.com.
- "The Dinner Detective"** ---- The Dinner Detective hosts an interactive murder mystery dinner theater show, billed as the largest in the Western United States; event includes dinner, floor show and clues to help the audience solve the crime; 6 p.m. Dec. 18 and Dec. 31; Embassy Suites San Diego Bay, 601 Pacific Coast Highway, San Diego; \$59.95 (includes four-course dinner); 619-239-2400.
- "The Drowsy Chaperone"** ---- Premiere Productions presents the regional theater premiere of this Tony-winning 2006 musical about a man whose description of his favorite Broadway show from 1928 comes to life before the audience's eyes; 8 p.m. Dec. 17; 4 p.m. Dec. 18; 1 p.m. Dec. 19; Avo Playhouse, 303 Main St., Vista; \$21; 760-724-2110 or vistix.com. Critic's choice.
- "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas"** ---- The Old Globe presents its 13th annual production of this Mel Marvin/Timothy Mason musical that brings Dr. Seuss' holiday classic story to life onstage; showtimes vary but generally: 7 p.m. Tuesdays-Fridays; 11 a.m., 2 and 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; plus additional performances; runs Dec. 26; Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego; \$39-\$77, adults; \$20-\$57, children; 619-234-5623 or theoldglobe.org.
- "Forever Plaid"** ---- The California Center for the Arts, Escondido, presents Stuart' Ross' comedy about four long-dead 1960s harmony singers who are resurrected to perform the concert they never had the chance to do in life; 7 p.m. Jan. 29; California Center for the Arts, Escondido, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido; \$28-\$45 (\$65 VIP tickets); 800-988-4253 or artcenter.org.
- "Holiday Madness"** ---- Carlsbad Senior Playreaders presents a program of humorous skits, a 1940s-style radio show, holiday song sing-alongs in two North County locations; 12:45 p.m. Dec. 16 at Carlsbad Senior Center, 799 Pine Ave., Carlsbad; also at 2 p.m. Dec. 19 at Vista Library, 700 Eucalyptus Ave., Vista; free; 760-721-8928.
- "Holiday Show 2010"** ---- Classic Youth Theatre Inc. presents a youth holiday program featuring "Adventure for Santa" skit, Christmas carols, theatrical scenes, pop songs and blues guitar by Jeremy Price; 7 p.m. Dec. 17; 6350 Yarrow Road, Carlsbad; \$10 (former CYT students get in free); classicyouththeatre.org.
- Human Action Festival** ---- Ion Theatre presents its first festival dedicated to provocative political plays, live presentations of world literature and documentary films courtesy of the Human Rights Watch; the seven-day festival will feature themed programs for each day: "Pride Night"/LGBTQ in America, Dec. 17; "Americas"/North and South America, Dec. 18; "Words of Women"/Women's Rights, Dec. 19; "Home Front"/Contemporary American Issues, Dec. 20; full festival schedule can be found online; Ion Theatre, 3704 Sixth Ave., San Diego; \$10 donation per day; 619-600-5020 or iontheatre.com.
- "It's a Wonderful Life!"** ---- Welk Resorts Theatre presents Tony Palermo's new "radio-on-stage" adaptation of the 1947 Frank Capra film classic about a suicidal man who discovers how important he is to his community and family with the help of an apprentice angel; 8 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 1 p.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays; through Dec. 30; Welk Resorts

Theatre, 8860 Lawrence Welk Drive, Escondido; \$54-\$68, show only; \$57-\$73, show and lunch or dinner buffet; 888-802-7469 or welktheatresandiego.com.

"It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play" ---- Cygnet Theatre presents its fifth annual production of Joe Landry's stage adaptation of the Frank Capra's holiday film about a suicidal man who discovers how important he is to his community and family with the help of an apprentice angel, re-set in a 1940s radio studio, complete with sound effects and live music; 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays-Thursdays; 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; 4 p.m. Saturdays; 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays; through Dec. 31; Cygnet Theatre, Juan and Twiggs streets, Old Town San Diego; \$24-\$49; 619-337-1525 or www.cygnettheatre.com. Critic's Choice.

"Joey Molina's Broadway Review" ---- The veteran local actor faetured in the Old Globe's "Grinch" musical and San Diego Rep's "Celebration of the Lizard," "Zoot Suit" and "A Christmas Carol" presents a free concert of Broadway favorites; 4 and 7 p.m. Jan. 5; California Center for the Arts, Escondido, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido; free; 800-988-4253 or artcenter.org.

"John and Juan: A History of the Golden Stage" --- The center's Performances for Youth theater series features this educational romp that traces 500 years of California history; designed for children in grades kindergarten through high school; 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. Jan. 19; California Center for the Arts, Escondido, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido; \$2.50; 800-988-4253 or artcenter.org.

"Lamb's Players Festival of Christmas" ---- Lamb's presents its 33rd annual Christmas play, this year a revival of its popular "It's Christmas and It's Live," about a vocal quartet hoping for its big break on a 1950s television show, when a Christmas Eve blizzard snowballs their chances; 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays-Thursdays; 8 p.m. Fridays; 4 and 8 p.m. Saturdays; 2 p.m. Sundays; through Dec. 30; Lamb's Players Theatre, 1142 Orange Ave., Coronado; \$20-\$58; 619-437-0600 or lambplayers.org.

"La Pastorela de Libertad" ---- Teatro Mascara Magica presents its 20th annual Mexican-inspired Christmas musical, which puts a comical, contemporary twist on the story of the shepherds' journey to Bethlehem for Jesus' birth, where the angels help them ward off temptation from Lucifer, featuring a bilingual script and Christmas carols sung in Spanish; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 16-Dec. 18; 2 p.m. Dec. 18 and Dec. 19; Lyceum Theatre, 79 Horton Plaza, San Diego; \$15, adults; \$10, students, military; \$7, children under 12; 619-544-1000.

"Last Sunday Cabaret" ---- Lamb's Players Theatre presents an evening of classic standards, jazz, gospel and Broadway tunes, performed at 7 p.m. on the last Sunday of each month; Anthology, 1337 India St., San Diego; \$15-\$45; 619-595-0300 or www.lambplayers.org, anthologysd.com.

"The Lennon Sisters: Songs & Memories" ---- The Welk Resorts Theatre presents "America's Sweethearts of Song" sharing music and memories; Jan. 26-Feb. 6; Welk Resorts Theatre, 8860 Lawrence Welk Drive, Escondido; \$65, show only; \$80, show and lunch or dinner buffet; 888-802-7469 or welktheatresandiego.com.

Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theatre ---- Balboa Park Puppet Guild presents Puppet Express and Eva Kvass presents "The Merry Christmas Show" through Dec. 29; showtimes, 10 and 11:30 a.m. Wednesdays-Fridays; 11 a.m., 1 and 2:30 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater, Balboa Park, San Diego; \$5, adults; \$4, seniors; \$3, children 12 and under; 619-544-9203 or balboaparkpuppets.com.

"A Mary Christmas: Mary and Friends" ---- Premiere Productions' Holiday Theatre Festival presents local singer/songwriter Mary Jaeb, performing selections from her new holiday CD "A Mary Christmas," along with special guests; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 17; 1 p.m. Dec. 18; Broadway Theater, 340B E. Broadway, Vista; \$17.50; 760-806-7905 or broadwayvista.com.

"Memories & Melodies" ---- Curtain Call Company presents an evening of Broadway favorites and scenes, including one act filled with scenes from past Curtain Call shows including "The Odd Couple" and "The Fantaticks" and one fact featuring Las Vegas soprano Stephanie Fry; 7:30 p.m. Jan. 14; Fallbrook Hilltop Center, Fallbrook; call for ticket prices; 760-685-7386.

"Mistletoe, Music & Mayhem" ---- North Coast Repertory Theatre presents the premiere of Matt Thompson and Phil Johnson's zany holiday cabaret show/sketch comedy; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 16-Dec. 18; 2 p.m. Dec. 19; North Coast Repertory Theatre, 987D Lomas Santa Fe Drive, Solana Beach; \$20-\$25; 858-481-1055 or northcoastrep.org.

"MiXtape" ---- Lamb's Players Theatre has extended its production of this new revue by Jon Lorenz and Colleen Kollar Smith, offering a fun and fast-paced musical journey through the music of the 1980s; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 16; 8 p.m. Dec. 17; 4 and 8 p.m. Dec. 18; 2 p.m. Dec. 19; Lamb's Players at the Horton Grand Theatre, 444 Fourth Ave., San Diego; \$29-\$58; 619-437-0600 or lambplayers.org.

"Mr. Scrooge and Mr. Dickens" ---- Patio Playhouse presents an adaptation of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" featuring Dickens himself narrating the holiday novel, along with performances of music, dancing and singing; 7 p.m. Dec. 16-Dec. 18; 2 p.m. Dec. 18 and Dec. 19; Patio Playhouse, 201 E. Grand Ave., Suite 1D, Escondido; call for ticket prices; 760-746-6669 or patioplayhouse.com.

"My Fatal Valentine" ---- Newly formed Curtain Call Productions presents Eileen Moushey's comedy murder-mystery, set at a romance writers' convention, on the third Thursday evening of each month; Hukilau Restaurant, Fallbrook Golf Course, Fallbrook; \$35; 760-723-2724 or e-mail curtaincallcompany@yahoo.com.

New Shanghai Circus ---- The Chinese performance troupe returns to the center with a program of acrobatics, tumbling, juggling and contortionism; 3 p.m. Jan. 23; California Center for the Arts, Escondido, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido; \$20-\$33 (\$54 VIP tickets); 800-988-4253 or artcenter.org.

"Night of the Laughing Dead! ... We're Dying to Cast You" ---- Mystery Cafe Dinner Theatre presents a fast-paced mystery-comedy about a series of murders that take place while a horror movie is being cast; 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; runs indefinitely; Imperial House Restaurant, 505 Kalmia St., San Diego; \$59.50, price includes four-course dinner; 619-460-2200 or mysterycafe.net.

"Night Stage to Big Shaft" ---- Peggy Sue Productions presents Grant Gelvin's new murder-mystery-comedy dinner theater production about a murder spree that occurs at a stage stop in the California mining town of Big Shaft, circa 1853; 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays (no performances on Christmas weekend); runs through February; Mikki's Restaurant, 1639 E. Valley Parkway, Escondido; \$32-\$35 (includes three-course dinner and show); reservations required to 760-489-2496, pegsuepro@aol.com or www.peggysueanddinnertoo.com.

"Oliver!" ---- Premiere Productions' Annual Holiday Theater Festival presents Lionel Bart's Tony-winning musical based on Charles Dickens' novel "Oliver Twist"; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 16 and Dec. 18; 4 p.m. Dec. 19; Avo Playhouse, 303 Main St., Vista; \$21; 760-724-2110 or vistix.com.

"Once Upon a Mattress" ---- Patio Playhouse Youtheatre presents this musical comedy spoof of the "Princess and the Pea" fairy tale, featuring actors ages 6 to 18; opens Jan. 14 and runs through Jan. 30; showtimes, 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; 2 p.m. Sundays (plus 2 p.m. Jan. 22); Patio Playhouse, 201 E. Grand Ave., Escondido; \$10, adults; \$7, youth ages 16 and under; 760-746-6669 or patioplayhouse.org.

"Plaid Tidings" ---- The Old Globe presents a holiday edition of Stuart Ross' long-running comedy "Forever Plaid," the story of a 1960s-era men's vocal harmony quartet resurrected from the dead for one last show; 7 p.m. Tuesdays-Sundays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; through Dec. 26; Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, The Old Globe, Balboa Park, San Diego; tickets start at \$35; 619-234-5623 or theoldglobe.org.

"The Quibbles" ---- Carlsbad Senior Playreaders presents Richard and Karen Riehl in a reading of Karen Riehl's 1940s radio-hour style comedy, featuring skits and sing-alongs; 12:45 p.m. Dec. 16 at the Vista Library, 700 Eucalyptus St., Vista; and at 2 p.m. Dec. 19 at the Carlsbad Senior Center, 799 Pine Ave., Carlsbad; free; 760-268-1946.

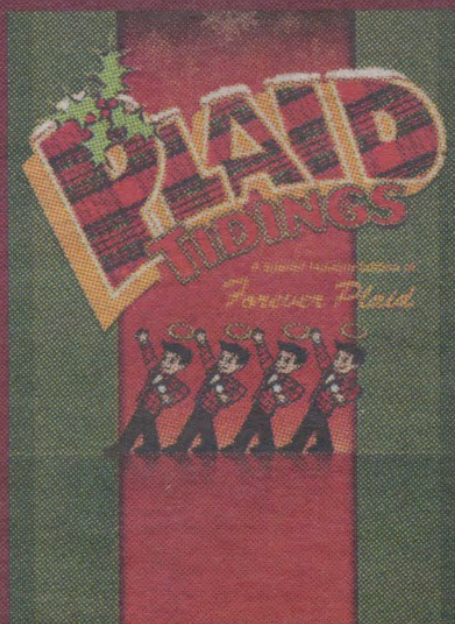
"Ruined" ---- La Jolla Playhouse presents Lynn Nottage's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama set in a woman-run brothel in the war-torn Congo; 8 p.m. Dec. 16-Dec. 18; 2 p.m. Dec. 18 and Dec. 19; 7 p.m. Dec. 19; La Jolla Playhouse at Mandell Weiss Theatre, UC San Diego, La Jolla; \$31-\$66; 858-550-1010 or lajollaplayhouse.org. Critic's choice.

"Santa Claus Is Coming Out" ---- Diversionary Theatre presents Jeffrey Solomon's theatrical "mock-umentary" exposing St. Nick's secret romantic life, his fearful youth during the Middle Ages, and how his promotional deal with Coca-Cola forces him to stay in the closet; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 16; 8 p.m. Dec. 17; 3 and 8 p.m. Dec. 18; 2 and 7 p.m. Dec. 19; Diversionary Theatre, 4545 Park Blvd., San Diego; \$21-\$33; 619-220-0097 or diversionary.org.

"Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" ---- Premiere Productions' Annual Holiday Theater Festival presents this new musical comedy about the frantic search that erupts at the North Pole when Santa's new supersonic sleigh takes off on a joyride of its own and gets lost on Christmas Eve; noon Dec. 18; Avo Playhouse, 303 Main St., Vista; \$13, general; \$11, seniors, students and military; \$8, children 12 and under; 760-724-2110 or vistix.com.

"The Santaland Diaries" ---- New Village Arts Theatre reprises its 2009 production of David Sedaris' bitingly funny solo show based on his own experiences as a disgruntled Christmas elf in Macy's department store during the busy holiday season; 8 p.m.

PLAID TIDINGS

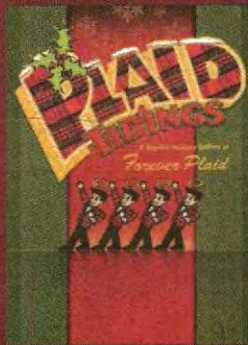


This special holiday edition continues the story of the singing group Forever Plaid whose lives were lost in an accident involving a busload of teens en route to see "The Ed Sullivan Show." Encouraged by a heavenly phone call from Rosemary Clooney, the high-spirited singing quartet--Frankie, Sparky, Jinx and Smudge--are transported from the ethereal cosmos to stage a nostalgic holiday extravaganza for world-weary mortals on Earth. It's stuffed with such "Plaid-erized" Christmas standards as "Mr. Santa," "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a

Merry Little Christmas." The Old Globe, Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. Tues.-Sun. Dec. 10 through Dec. 26. \$35-\$77. (619) 234-5623. theoldglobe.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR DECEMBER

PLAID TIDINGS

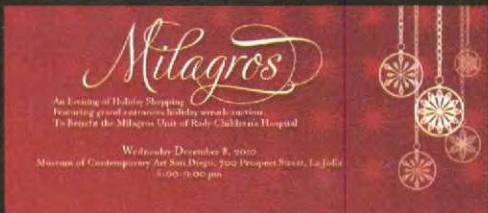


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arts

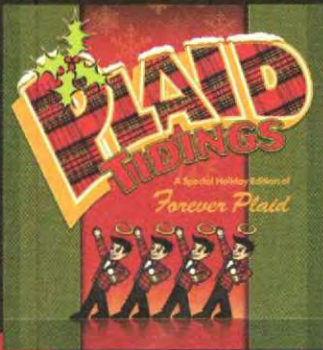
BY EDWIN RENDÓN



MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART
SAN DIEGO / LA JOLLA:
AN EVENING OF HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Miracles do happen during the holidays and with your help you can make a difference while taking care of that holiday shopping list! Giving Back Magazine is proud to present Milagros, an evening full of fashion, sparkling jewelry, a festive wreaths auction and shopping, shopping, shopping! Come take part in what promises to be an unforgettable night to benefit the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Rady Children's Hospital San Diego. Come bid on one-of-a-kind wreaths from local florists, designers, boutiques and even airline providers (travel included ladies and gentlemen). Decorate your home making a grand entrance while giving the Milagros of the holidays.

December 8th | www.gbsan.com



IN FOCUS

40

COPLEY SYMPHONY HALL:
HOLIDAY POPS

San Diego's favorite Broadway son returns home for Christmas! Brian Stokes Mitchell alongside our very own San Diego Symphony, the San Diego Master Chorale and San Diego Children's Choir for three nights of our city's favorite Yuletide tradition, Holiday Pops. Nestle with your loved ones for the merry cheer only Season songs can bring like "Deck the Halls," "Carol of the Bells," "I'll Be Home for Christmas" and very special takes from Stokes' new album "Ring Christmas Bells." Conducted by Matthew Garbutt this year's Holiday Pops promises a weekend that'll leave you in high spirits ready for the warmth that comes during this time of the year. December 17th, 18th & 19th

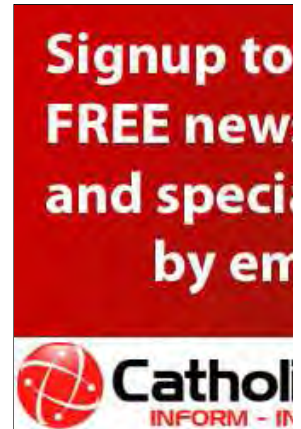


www.sandiegosymphony.org

THE OLD GLOBE THEATRE:
PLAID TIDINGS

The wonderful folks at the Old Globe have a special gift for you this holiday season on the year of their 75th anniversary. It's wonderfully woven in the finest woolen cloth, it's checkered, has its origins in Scotland and comes in a quartet. With their signature jackets Forever Plaid returns to its home in San Diego with a Yuletide present just right for everyone. In a retro holiday extravaganza the Plaid boys take us from the 50's and 60's with rip roarin' hilarious harmonic renditions of classic tunes like "Let it Snow", "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" and "Mr. Santa." Come celebrate with the Old Globe and Plaid Tidings to all and to all a good night!

Now - December 26th | www.theoldglobe.org



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Mostly Cloudy, 65° F

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Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid

The Old Globe 1363 Old Globe Way
San Diego, CA 92101

phone: 619-23-GLOBE

url: <http://oldglobe.org/>

directions: Driving South Take Interstate 5 into San Diego. Exit at Sassafras Street and follow Kettner Boulevard to Laurel Street (second stop light). Turn left (east) on Laurel and drive straight into Balboa Park. Driving North Take Interstate 5 North to the Sixth Avenue exit. Turn right (north) and follow Sixth Avenue to Laurel Street. Turn right (east) on Laurel and drive straight into Balboa Park. Driving West Take Interstate 8 to 163. Go south on 163 and exit at University Ave. At the light, continue straight along Sixth Avenue to Laurel. Turn left (east) on Laurel and drive straight into Balboa Park. For handicapped drop-off or 10 minute ticket purchase From Park Blvd., turn on Village Place and drive into Balboa Park. Turn right onto Old Globe Way and continue until you meet the theatre. Patrons are permitted to park for a maximum of 10 minutes.

[get directions](#)

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description/

Plaid Tidings – A Special Holiday Edition of Forever Plaid continues the story of the singing group whose lives were lost in an accident involving a busload of teens en route to see “The Ed Sullivan Show.” Encouraged by a heavenly phone call from Rosemary Clooney, the high-spirited boys of Forever Plaid – Frankie, Sparky, Jinx and Smudge – are transported from the ethereal cosmos to stage a nostalgic holiday extravaganza for world-weary mortals on Earth. Stuffed with such “Plaid-erized” Christmas standards as “Mr. Santa,” “Let It Snow” and “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas,” Plaid Tidings is one holiday treat that is truly heaven-sent.

admission/

Price:
Ticket prices start at \$35