

November 22, 2021

“A Christmas Carol”

Lyric Theatre

Written by Charles Dickens

Adapted by Michael Baron

Directed by Michael Baron and Ashley Wells

By Franci Hart, OKC Friday

Magic filled the air! The moon was full, the air crispy cold and the excitement over the opening of Lyric’s “A Christmas Carol,” was everywhere. This was the second year for this Christmas classic to be performed outdoors at Harn Homestead and this production was even more sharply paced than the innovative inaugural production.

In 2020, Lyric Theatre was the only theater in the United States and possibly in the world, to produce a live performance of Dickens’ classic. Staging the production outdoors solved the problems the pandemic produced. A clever audience spacing and travel from scene to scene created the safety necessary for a production during the height of a pandemic. The concept was so unique that the “New York Times” and BBC wrote articles about it.

The 2021 production, building on the 2020 success, is even more fun! The story has been cut a bit. But who really needs all those scenes Dickens wrote. Most of us could recite the story from heart, anyway. However, even with the cuts, the heart of the story is strong and vibrant. And its message of caring kindness resonates.

Scene design by Adam Koch is delightful. There are several points in the production where the audience is encircled by the stage action, sort of like circle theater in reverse. Fabian J. Garcia’s lighting adds so much to the magic of the evening. Trees, props, even characters twinkle.

“A Christmas Carol” has two stellar casts headed by Jonathan Beck Reed and Jerome Stevenson as Scrooge. While there are many familiar faces from past productions. Several new performers add a freshness.

Since the audience moves and stands throughout the 75-minute production, comfortable walking shoes and warm layers are needed to assure comfort. Although some portable chairs are provided by the company, the staging is such that sitting down is possibly not the best option for seeing everything.

“A Christmas Carol” will run at Harn Homestead, 1721 N. Lincoln, through December 23. It is Christmas magic!