



BILLINGS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA & CHORALE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 4, 2018

The Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale Presents
Holiday Pops: A Dickens Christmas, in 2 Performances.

The Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale celebrates the holiday season with two performances of our *Holiday Pops* concert, **A Dickens Christmas**, Saturday, December 16 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 17 at 2 p.m. **A Dickens Christmas** features Dan Nickerson as the Narrator and Bret Weston, vocal soloist. Come see Santa and enjoy this timeless classic at the Alberta Bair Theater.

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) wrote *A Christmas Carol* in just a few weeks, beginning in October of 1843. By Christmas of that year 6,000 copies were sold in the first five days, calling for another printing. Only 2 months after its first publication, no less than 8 stage productions were in the works. At the time in Victorian England, Christmas as we know it today was not celebrated. Dickens helped to change that with theme of unity, family and feasting, so prevalent in *A Christmas Carol*. It was Dickens' response to the child labor abuse in the mines and factories. It was his way of bringing these issues to the public eye. During a reading of *A Christmas Carol* in Chicago in 1867, a prominent business owner was so moved by the story; he shut down his factory on Christmas Day and gave turkeys to all his employees.

A Christmas Carol has been adapted to the stage over 40 times and to film over 20 times, most recently, the November release of *The Man Who Invented Christmas* starring Christopher Plummer as Ebenezer Scrooge. It has been adapted to TV, Radio, Graphic Novels, and yet more books. *A Christmas Carol* has never been out of print since its first publication over 150 years ago.

Dan Nickerson is a BF graduate of Cornish College of the Arts ('10) Theatre program in Seattle, Washington. He has performed on stage and on camera in California, Washington and Montana. Since moving to Billings in 2011, he has performed at the Billings Studio Theater (BST), Venture Theatre, Prince Theater & The Helena Theatre Company. In the fall of 2013, he took over as Youth Director for NOVA Center of the Performing Arts and hasn't looked back since: directing, writing, and producing shows for the Youth Conservatory year around (novabillings.org). Nickerson is also no stranger to the Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale stage. He has performed as Hector Berlioz in *Symphonie Fantastique*, the BSO&C's premier of ***Behind the Scenes***. Most recently, he played Mother Goose and Alexander T. Wolf in the 2016-2017 family concert, *The True*



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Story the Three Little Pigs. In *Holiday Pops: A Dickens' Christmas*, he will be the narrator of *A Christmas Carol*.

Bret Weston is currently in his 24th year performing with the Billings Symphony Chorale. He attended MSU-Bozeman and studied vocal performance under Lowell Hickman. During his vocal career, Weston has performed with Venture Theatre, the Billings Studio Theatre, The Rimrock Opera Company and of course, the Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale. He performed as a soloist in 2016's *Symphony in the Park*, and most recently was a featured soloist in November's *Luther's Legacy*.

Holiday Pops: A Dickens' Christmas is proudly sponsored by Lee & Denise Scherer, and MorningStar Senior Living. Guest artist sponsors are Guy Glenn & Elizabeth McNamer Glenn. The 2017-2018 season is sponsored by The Oakland Companies. The 2017-2018 host hotel is The Northern Hotel.

Celebrate the holiday season with the Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale's *Holiday Pops: **A Dickens Christmas*** in two performances: Saturday, December 16 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 17 at 2 p.m. at the Alberta Bair Theater.

For more information about *Holiday Pops*, billingsymphony.org/holiday-pops/

Tickets are available by calling 252-3610 or online at billingsymphony.org

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