

WHAT WE'RE LOVING ➡ right now

**A LITTLE LIST OF WHAT WE THINK IS AWESOME
IN THE DRIFTLESS REGION THIS FALL...**

A CHRISTMAS CAROL, REIMAGINED!

While the Commonweal Theatre is no stranger to producing Charles Dicken's *A Christmas Carol*, the newest incarnation will feature a surprising twist – for the first time in the company's history, the role of Ebenezer Scrooge will be played by a woman. Associate Artistic Director Adrienne Sweeney will put her mark on

Commonweal history as she sits behind the miser's desk this winter. Originally scheduled for 2020, the premiere of this new adaptation is the one holdover from the shuttered season.

It's an idea that has been floating around the company since 2018. Former Resident Ensemble member Philip Muehe brought the concept to Sweeney after hearing about Sally



Nystuen Vahle's performance at Dallas Theater Center, and that of Charity Jones performance at the Guthrie. Muehe knew right away there was something there: "I texted Adrienne as soon as I saw all of Charity's performances had sold out. We knew there was a real demand for fresh takes on this classic story. We both agreed our audiences would find a female-centered adaptation as thrilling as we did." Muehe took the lead on adapting Commonweal's version and eventually landed on a script that tells the same familiar story, with all the characters you know and love, accompanied by female-identifying actors portraying Scrooge, Marley, and all three of the Christmas Ghosts.

"It just makes sense when you think about it," Muehe says. "This material works just as well for women as it does for men, and the lessons Dickens intended apply to all of us, regardless of gender identity." While a seasoned veteran of the stage, this role feels special to Sweeney. "It's a role I've always wanted to do," says Sweeney, "but never thought was possible. It's a dream come true and a challenging proposition all at once. I am excited for our patrons to experience this story in a whole new way. With fresh eyes, they may see or feel something they hadn't before."

Tickets are on sale now, and with the Commonweal back to full capacity, hopes are high for a successful run when performances begin on November 19. For a complete performance schedule of all 2021 offerings visit the Commonweal's website, or call the Box Office at (800) 657-7025 or visit www.CommonwealTheatre.org.