

COVER STORY

Lights down, curtain up!

By **MARY ANN ALBRIGHT**
Columbian staff writer

From an oratorio to a ballet to a modern take on the Charles Dickens classic "A Christmas Carol," this weekend is ushering in the holidays with a packed lineup of seasonal performances.

Christmas is taking center stage in dance, theater, and lots of music

The entertainment options begin Dec. 3 with a performance by Clarion Brass, a 14-member professional brass choir from Spokane, at St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Vancouver.

On the same evening, the Touch of Class Chorale, a 50-member choir led by Tony Bump, will give a holiday concert at Mill Plain United Methodist Church, and Vancouver Ballet Theatre will offer

the first of its four "Nutcracker" performances at Fort Vancouver High School. This is the 34th annual "Nutcracker" run for Vancouver Dance Theatre, which features local youth and young adult ballet students. The show is directed by Alexandrous Ballard.

Like Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker" — and Handel's "Messiah," which will be performed



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Vancouver Dance Theatre presents "The Nutcracker" on Dec. 3-5 at Fort Vancouver High School.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Clarion Brass holiday concert

- When: 7 p.m. Dec. 3.
- Where: St. Andrew Lutheran Church, 5607 N.E. Gher Road, Vancouver.
- Cost: \$16, \$11 for seniors and students.
- Information: http://figarotunes.com/winter_tour/winter_on_tour.html or <http://brownpapertickets.com/event/135274>.

Touch of Class Chorale Christmas concert

- When: 7 p.m. Dec. 3.
- Where: Mill Plain United Methodist Church, 15804 S.E. Mill Plain Blvd., Vancouver.
- Cost: \$10, \$8 for seniors 55 and older, \$6 for children ages 9-18 and free for those 8 and younger.

- Information: <http://thetouchofclasschoir.com>.

Vancouver Dance Theatre presents "The Nutcracker"

- When: 7 p.m. Dec. 3 and 4. 2 p.m. Dec. 4 and 5.
- Where: Fort Vancouver High School, 5700 E. 18th St., Vancouver.
- Cost: \$12, \$10 for seniors 65 and older and children 18 and younger. Discount coupons available online.
- Information: <http://vancouverdancetheatre.com>, 360-624-8098.

Clark College Concert Choir and Concert Band present A Slavic Celebration

- When: 7:30 p.m. Dec. 3.
- Where: Royal Durst Theatre, Vancouver School of Arts and

Academics, 3101 Main St., Vancouver.

- Cost: Free.
- Information: <http://clark.edu>, 360-992-2662.

Slocum House Theatre Company presents "A Christmas, Carol"

- When: 8 p.m. Dec. 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 and 18, and 2 p.m. Dec. 5, 12, and 19.
- Where: Slocum House, 605 Esther St., Vancouver.
- Cost: \$13, \$11 for seniors 60 and older and children 12 and younger.
- Information: <http://slocumhouse.com>, 360-696-2427.

Christmas with Jim Fischer & Friends

- What: A benefit concert

for Friends of the Carpenter, a Vancouver ministry for the homeless.

- When: 3 and 7 p.m. Dec. 4.
- Where: First Church of God, 3300 N.E. 78th St., Vancouver.
- Cost: \$15 in advance, \$20 day of show.
- Information: <http://friendsofthecarpenter.org>, 360-750-4752.

Junior Symphony of Vancouver holiday concert

- When: 7:30 p.m. Dec. 4.
- Where: Water Resources Education Center, 4600 S.E. Columbia Way, Vancouver.
- Cost: \$20.
- Information: <http://oregonchamberplayers.org/jsv.html>, 360-696-4084.

Metropolitan Performing Arts Academy's "Winter Wonderland" holiday musical revue

- When: 7:30 p.m. Dec. 4.
- Where: Alki Middle School, 1800 N.W. Bliss Road, Vancouver.
- Cost: \$10, \$8 for students and seniors.
- Information: <http://metropaa.org>, 503-724-9462.

Bravo! Vancouver presents Handel's "Messiah: An Oratorio"

- When: 2 p.m. Dec. 5.
- Where: St. Joseph Catholic Church, 400 S. Andresen Road, Vancouver.
- Cost: \$20.
- Information: <http://bravoconcerts.com>, 360-906-0441.

OTHER CHRISTMAS SHOWS LATER THIS MONTH

■ **Touch of Class Chorale Christmas concert:** 7 p.m. Dec. 10. St. John's Presbyterian Church, 1206 N.E. Birch St., Camas. \$10, \$8 for seniors 55 and older, \$6 for children ages 9-18, free for those 8 and younger. <http://thetouchofclasschoir.com>.

■ **Sing Your Own "Messiah"** with Clark College Chorale and First United Methodist Church Sanctuary Choir: 2 p.m. Dec. 11. First United Methodist Church, 401 E. 33rd Street, Vancouver. Free. 360-693-5881.

■ **Touch of Class Chorale Christmas concert:** 2 p.m. Dec. 11. St. Andrew Lutheran Church, 5607 N.E. Gher Road, Vancouver. \$10, \$8 for seniors 55 and older, \$6 for youths ages 9-18, free for those 8 and younger. <http://thetouchofclasschoir.com>.

■ **"Christmas Stories"** by Dance Fusion NW: 2:30 p.m. Dec. 11 and 12, and 6:30 p.m. Dec. 11. Thomas Jefferson Middle School, 3000 N.W. 119th St., Vancouver. \$10, \$5 for students younger than 18, free for those younger than 4. <http://dancefusionnw.com>, 360-521-9973.

■ **Vancouver USA Singers' Majesty of Christmas concert:** 7 p.m. Dec. 11, 3 p.m. Dec. 12. First Presbyterian Church, 4300 Main St., Vancouver. \$12, \$10 for seniors and students, free for children 12 and younger. <http://vancouveringers.org>, 360-567-6294.

■ **Slocum House Christmas program:** 7 p.m. Dec. 13. Slocum House, 605 Esther St., Vancouver. By donation. <http://slocumhouse.com>, 360-696-2427.

slocumhouse.com, 360-696-2427.

■ **Northwest Classical Ballet's "Nutcracker":** 7:30 p.m. Dec. 17 and 18, 2 p.m. Dec. 18 and 3:30 p.m. Dec. 19. Prairie High School, 11500 N.E. 117th Ave., Vancouver. \$15. <http://nwclassicalballet.com>, 888-487-7454.

■ **The Portland Mormon Choir and Orchestra's Stories of Christmas concert:** 7:30 p.m. Dec. 17 and 18, 2:30 p.m. Dec. 18. Skyview High School, 1300 N.W. 139th St., Vancouver. \$10 general admission, \$16 reserved seats. <http://portlandmormon.org>, 503-489-7101 or 360-719-8978.

■ **The Big Horn Brass Christmas**

show: 7 p.m. Dec. 18. Union High School, 6201 N.W. Friberg Strunk St., Camas. \$15, free for children under 12. <http://vancouver-symphony.org>, 360-735-7278.

■ **Concert with guitarist John Standefer:** 7 p.m. Dec. 18. Washburn Performing Arts Center at Washougal High School, 1201 39th St., Washougal. \$12 in advance, \$17 at the door. <http://johnstandefer.com>.

■ **Columbia Dance's "Nutcracker":** 2 and 7 p.m. Dec. 18, 1 and 5 p.m. Dec. 19, and 2 p.m. Dec. 20. Royal Durst Theatre, Vancouver School of Arts and Academics, 3101 Main St., Vancouver. \$18 for adults, \$10 for children 12 and younger. <http://columbiadance.org>, 360-737-1922.

HOLIDAY

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by Bravo! Vancouver on Dec. 5 — some of this weekend's shows are classic holiday fare. Others, however, are all new.

For Slocum House Theatre Company's December show, Vancouver resident Martina Paris-Fully wrote a contemporary take on "A Christmas Carol." Called "A Christmas, Carol," Paris-Fully's play follows Dickens' general story line but is set in the present day and features a grumpy, miserly woman named Carol in the Scrooge role.

"We just thought it might be fun to have a more current version," Paris-Fully said.

The show is directed by her husband, Jim Fully. He said he prefers his wife's version of the show to the original.

"It's so dark and gloomy," he said of the Dickens story. "This is fun and light."

That's also the mood the Metropolitan Performing Arts Academy was going for with "Winter Wonderland," its Dec. 4 holiday musical revue at Alki Middle School in Salmon Creek. The academy launched in January, so this is its first Christmas show. Creative Director Noah Scott plans to make it an annual tradition.

The show will feature singing and dancing by local performers of all ages.

"It's a very old-school, 'White Christmas'-style show," Scott said. "All the big standards are there."

Those old favorites include "Jingle Bells" and "(There's No Place Like) Home for the Holidays," but the academy's show also will feature con-



The Clark College Concert Choir and Concert Band will team up for A Slavic Celebration on Dec. 3. The concert will include seasonal pieces.

temporary selections such as Josh Groban's "Thankful" and Mariah Carey's "All I Want For Christmas Is You."

Also Dec. 4, Vancouver pianist Jim Fischer will give two concerts benefitting Friends of the Carpenter, a local ministry for the homeless. The 3 p.m. show will feature the Clark College Chorale, and the 7 p.m. performance will include the Touch of Class Chorale. Other performers will join Fischer, as well. Both shows will take place at the First Church of God in Vancouver.

As a third option for Dec. 4, the Junior Symphony of Vancouver will give a holiday concert at the Water Resources Education Center. The group is conducted by Timoteus Racz, and this is its 10th season.

For those seeking free entertainment this weekend, the Clark College Concert Choir and Concert Band will present A Slavic Celebration on Dec. 3 at the Vancouver School of Arts and Academics' Royal Durst Theatre.

Though technically the college music department's fall performance, the concert will



GORDON TROUSDALE

Clarion Brass, a 14-member professional brass choir from Spokane, will perform in Vancouver on Dec. 3.



"A Christmas, Carol," presented by Slocum House Theatre Company, features Alicia Marie Turvin as Carol Scrooge and Todd Langwell as Bob Cratchit.

include some holiday pieces such as "Russian Christmas Music," which is a band composition by American composer

Alfred Reed that's based on Russian holiday hymns, and a vocal arrangement by Jeff Funk of selections from Tchaik-



KEVIN GORBY

The Touch of Class Chorale will perform several times throughout the month, including on Dec. 3.

ovsky's "Nutcracker."

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