

In his novel *A Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens describes the Ghost of Christmas Past as neither a boy or a girl, but a young child of no particular gender with long white hair, a white gown, and an ethereal glow. The Ghost of Christmas Present, we are told, is a jolly and giant man with dark brown curly hair and a green fur-lined robe with a wreath atop of his head. The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come never speaks and is shrouded in a black, hooded cloak except for one long skeletal hand sticking out with a beckoning finger.

However, it is the decision of a play's Director and Costume Designer to choose what characters look like in their production. While they may choose to present these three ghosts, and the ghost of Jacob Marley, in a way that is similar to what Charles Dickens envisioned in his novel, they may also choose to portray them completely differently.

In Geva's production of *A Christmas Carol*, Costume Designer Devon Painter and Mark Cuddy, the show's director and adapter, choose to stay mostly faithful to Dickens descriptions of the Ghost of Christmas Past and the Ghost of Christmas Present when they considered how these two characters would look in our production. There are slight changes that give these characters each a unique quality, but they mostly align with Dickens description of them.

Activity: Using the novel, read Charles Dickens descriptions of the ghosts of Christmas Past and Christmas Present in *A Christmas Carol*, then consider the pictures of the same two characters, below, in Geva's stage adaptation. What are the similarities and what are the differences? Why do you think these choices were made? Would you have done anything differently? Is this how you imagined they would look?



(Above: The Ghost of Christmas Past in Geva's *A Christmas Carol*, 2011-2012)
(Right: The Ghost of Christmas Present in Geva's *A Christmas Carol*, 2011-2012)
* Photos courtesy of Ken Huth/Huth Photo