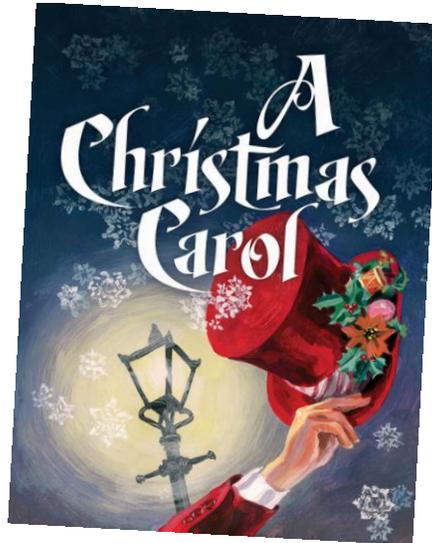


FAQ's

Guide to the Sensory-Friendly Performance



Q. What is a sensory-friendly performance?

A. A “sensory-friendly” performance is a theater production that is modified for individuals with sensory needs. A regular performance may be too loud, too bright or too busy for people with autism spectrum disorders, sensory processing disorders, anxiety or other cognitive or physical disabilities. The show is adapted to allow for more movement, staff and actors are specially trained to accommodate the needs of this population, and the “anything goes” environment creates a stress-free and more comfortable theater experience.

Q. When and where is the show taking place?

A. The sensory-friendly performance is taking place on Saturday, December 2 at 2PM in the Fine Arts Wing of Mount Wachusett Community College. The theatre is located at 444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440. It runs approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

Q. How can I get tickets?

A. Tickets for this performance can be purchased through the box office online at www.mwcc.edu/tam, in person or by phone at (978) 630-9388 beginning September 1, 2017. The box office is open Monday through Friday, 9:30AM to 12:30PM, and 1:30PM to 2:30PM. All seats are \$10.00. Be sure to mention that you would like to attend the sensory-friendly performance.

Q. Who should attend this performance?

A. The sensory-friendly performance is specially catered to children and adults with sensory input disorders, autism, or other developmental, cognitive and physical disabilities and their families and caretakers. This is a judgment-free, fun experience for the entire family. Whereas other public performances might frown upon a lot of movement or loud reactions, it will be fully embraced and supported during this performance. What better way to help build social and living skills to use later in life than to experience an event within the community. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Caretakers and family members of individuals with special needs are encouraged to attend.

Q. What changes can we expect for the sensory-friendly performance?

- Lower sound level, especially for startling or loud sounds
- Lights remain on at a low level in the theater during the performance
- A reduction of strobe lighting or lighting focused on the audience
- Patrons are free to talk and leave their seats during the performance
- Designated quiet areas adjacent to the theater
- Space throughout the theater for standing and movement
- Limited crowds and visitors at the Theatre at The Mount during the day and timing of the performance
- Theatre at The Mount staff trained to be inviting and accommodating to families' needs.

Q. If my child/family member is not able to sit through the entire show or needs to take a break during the performance, will we be able to leave the theatre? If they decide to, will we be able to return to our seat?

A. Yes, ushers and staff will be helping any travelers to the lobby area. If the patron decides they cannot finish the show, you can absolutely leave the theatre early. If they simply need a break, there will be a designated break area located adjacent to the theatre on the left hand side behind the green double doors marked REHEARSAL. Anyone is welcome to use this space if they need a break at any point during the performance or just need a quiet space to go to. There will be tables and chairs set up and the performance will be broadcasted via television into the room so you and your child/family member can continue to watch the show from the comfort of this space. The break area will be available to patrons throughout the duration of the performance and your child/family member is welcome to use this space as often and for as long as they would like to.

Q. Is there anything I can do to help my child/family member/client prep for this new experience?

A. Theatre at The Mount will provide a plot synopsis and a FAQ sheet to help prepare ahead of time for the performance. The Arc of Opportunity will also include on their website a social story which is a step-by-step instructional narrative about what to expect when coming to the theater. This is to help people, especially children, who have difficulty with transitioning into new environments. They are also invited to come and meet their seat prior to the start of the performance to better understand the layout of the theater and to talk with the staff.

Q. Can I bring edibles, fidget toys, headphones or other items that help my child/family member stay calm?

A. We encourage you to bring any items that might make the experience more comfortable and enjoyable, however, only bottled water is permitted in the theatre. All other food and beverages are prohibited.

Q. My family member is in a wheelchair. Can you accommodate us?

A. Yes, Theatre at the Mount has a wheelchair ramp and wheelchair accessible seating to accommodate up to 8 wheelchair patrons and their companions. We expect these seats to sell out quickly – be sure to purchase wheelchair accessible seating in advance to ensure a spot.

Q. Are service animals allowed in the theater?

A. Yes, Theatre at the Mount always allows service animals to accompany patrons.

Q. My child/family member is deaf or hard-of-hearing. Will there be ASL interpreters at the sensory-friendly performance?

A. No, but the Theatre at the Mount does have a limited number of assisted listening devices available upon request.