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**Cape May Stage Presents**  
**Peter Ekstrom's Adaptation of the**  
**'Heart-warming Holiday Musical'**  
**'An O. Henry Christmas'**  
**Directed by Chuck Hudson**

**"An O. Henry Christmas"**  
Adaptation, Music, and Lyrics by Peter Ekstrom.  
Directed by Chuck Hudson

Opens December 3, 2009  
Closes December 31, 2009

Cape May, NJ – November 18, 2009- Cape May Stage officially begins its holiday celebrations at the historic Robert Shackleton Playhouse on Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> with Peter Ekstrom's musical adaptation of the classic Christmas stories "The Gift of the Magi" and "The Last Leaf" in "An O. Henry Christmas". Bringing together two of the author's much loved stories, these very different tales of sacrifice and love combine to make a Christmas offering that is gentle and strong, sad and joyous, and warm and cozy for the holiday season. Directed by Chuck Hudson, "An O. Henry Christmas" opens December 3 at 8 p.m. and runs through December 31.

Award-winning author O. Henry wrote colorful short stories at the turn of the 20th century. His tales are masterworks known for wit, wordplay, optimism, warm characterization, irony, and clever twist endings. Playwright Peter Ekstrom gives audiences a "lively script and enchanting music to match the spirit of the O. Henry stories," says the *Louisville-Courier Journal*. "The lyrics, both intelligent and humorous, emphasize the comedy and drama experienced in everyday life."

In "An O Henry Christmas", act one takes place in 1905 and tells the story of "The Gift of the Magi". Although struggling to meet the rent, newlyweds Jim and Della Young could not be

happier or more in love. For their first Christmas together, each wants to give the other a special gift that symbolizes their love. Starring New York actor, Jason Ostrowski as Jim and Los Angeles' Tara Brown as Della, the couple's story will leave you with feelings of surprise and hope.

Act two takes place in Greenwich Village, New York, 1905 with the story of "The Last Leaf". Two women, Johnsy, a painter (also played by Tara Brown), and her new roommate Sue, a promising sculptor (played by NY-based Courtney Griswold), share an apartment and an artist's studio. As time passes, a strong friendship grows out of their passion for art and the youthful hopes and dreams they share with each other. Actor Bev Appleton rounds out the cast as Mr. Behrman, a neighboring artist who discovers his long-lost inspiration after he meets the two women. Written as a companion piece for "The Gift of the Magi", these two American fables about giving and hope will take the entire family on an unforgettable holiday journey, full of true Christmas spirit.

### **Production Team**

Production team includes Chuck Hudson (Director), Donald Toal (Production Stage Manager), Sarah Lambert (Set Designer), Maria Shaplin (Lighting Designer), Will Knapp (Sound Designer).

### **Ticket Information**

"An O. Henry Christmas" performances are Thursdays through Sundays at 8 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays at 3 p.m. from December 3 through December 31 on the Otto Haas Stage at the Robert Shackleton Playhouse, Cape May Stage. Tickets are \$35 adults, \$25 seniors, and \$12.50 students. Call (609) 884-1341 for tickets and information or visit the theatre's website, [www.capemaystage.com](http://www.capemaystage.com). Audio enhancement and wheelchair accessible seating are available with advance notice by calling the box office at (609) 884-1341.

This production is generously sponsored by CapeSCape and The Corner Cottage Apartments and by the Blue Pig Tavern at Congress Hall and The Ebbitt Room at the Virginia.