

## [Vpstart Crow An O. Henry Christmas](#)

November 12th, 2007

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Listen to our [review of Vpstart Crow's production of An O. Henry Christmas](#) [MP3 5:04 2.3MB].



**Laura:** This is the ShowBizRadio.net review of *An O. Henry Christmas* performed by [Vpstart Crow](#) in Manassas, Virginia. Mike and I saw the preview performance on Thursday evening, November 8, 2007.

**Mike:** This was the first Christmas show of the season that we've seen. It was a nice touching evening. Some of the stories I have read before; some of them I hadn't and I think they executed this show without being really sappy about it. They were pretty nice.

**Laura:** This show was kind of the start to getting you into the Christmas spirit and the Christmas mood. I really enjoyed it and had a good time. I, too, knew some of the stories. The story at the end 'The Gift of The Magi' was one of my favorites.

**Mike:** *An O. Henry Christmas* is a play written by Howard Burman based on the short stories of William Sydney Porter A.K.A O'Henry. A mysterious storyteller enters an abandoned railroad spur on the outskirts of New York City on Christmas Eve in 1893. In exchange for some hobo stew, "O.P." entertains a rag-tag mix of seemingly lost souls by spinning a few tales and, in the process, rekindles the spirit of giving.



**Laura:** One of the hobos, Agnes, was played by **Carolyn Cameron**. She was definitely the motherly type. One of the other characters was ill and so she was doting around her and trying to help her get well. She was very concerned about her well being and welfare and was just kind of a happy go lucky person. She did not dwell on the fact that she is homeless, but more on the fact that she does have a family through these other strangers who feel like her family.

**Mike:** Grover, the disgraced doctor, was played by **Ted Ballard**. He brought to the role a weariness that said he was just a no good doctor. He was depressed and accepted that depression and was upset that other people could not accept his state in life. That really came through in Ted's performance. I really enjoyed that.

**Laura:** The story teller was O.P. played by **Joseph Thornhill**. He was very much a rag tag. He has something to hide. Whenever the policeman (played by Greg Crowe) made an appearance, O.P. would get the heck out of there until the policeman left. It was obvious that he was hiding from something, but he was entertaining to watch.

**Mike:** I liked how he was able to switch his personalities. At times he was the crafty hobo sharing a story for food and then he was very tender, especially when he was talking about his wife near the end of the show. He also did a very kind thing near the very very end of the show that got everybody into an awww moment.



**Laura:** The set for *An O. Henry Christmas* was pretty cool. There was some pretty good art work on the walls. One of the neatest things was the box car.

**Mike:** There was a replica of a train's box car on the stage. It was very realistic. Ted Ballard designed it. It looked very solid. The hobos were climbing around in it and some of the characters came through it. It was a nice surprise. It looked very solid and real. It was hard to believe it was only a few feet long. I

really like the set design. The whole space was used very nicely.

One of the stories they told was "The Last Leaf." They did not have ivy anywhere on the inside of the set. All of the actors did focus on the same spot for that story. I think it was the right decision. If they had actually had a leaf up there it would have been some tricky special effects to pull that off.

**Laura:** I do encourage you to go see this show. One of the things I did notice was sometimes when a character faced away from the audience or turned around, I lost some of the words that they were saying. It is a small space and does soak up the sound. The actors do need to be aware that they do need to speak loudly.

**Mike:** The show ran about an hour and forty minutes with no intermission. It is playing through Sunday the 18th of November. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 8. Sundays at 3 and 7:30 at the Cramer Center in Manassas, Virginia.

**Laura:** Once you've seen the show, feel free to leave a comment about it. We'd also like to invite you to [join our free mailing list](#) so you can learn more about theater in the DC metro region.

**Mike:** This is a Christmas show taking place before Thanksgiving. But that's OK. It was very well done, not overly sentimental or sappy and I think you'll have a good time at it. If you do go see the show, tell them you heard about the show on ShowBizRadio.

**Laura:** And now, on with the show.

## **Cast**

- Fran: Janet Devine Smith
- Dinty: Jonathan Marget
- Agnes: Carolyn Cameron
- Grover: Ted Ballard
- Hal: Mike King
- Marguerite: Kathryn Kelly
- Guido: Greg Crowe
- O.P.: Joseph Thornhill

## **Crew**

- Artistic Director: Christine D. Lange
- Managing Director: Sara Joy Lebowitz
- Production Manager: Melissa Jo York-Tilley
- Director: Christine D. Lange
- Stage Manager: Sallie Willows
- Assistant Stage Manager: Christie Swaney
- Production Coordinator: Jamie Bartosavage Erdman
- Set Designer: Jordan Day
- Set Crew: Ted Ballard, Mike Day, Bob Lange
- Lighting Designer: William McLeod
- Costume Designer: Melissa Jo York-Tilley
- House Manager: Jenny Green
- Assistant House Manager: Kristen Green
- Publicity: Jay Tilley
- Poster Designer: Rich Scanlan
- Program Designer: Bob Smith
- Press Photos: Tim Betts