

Pickles Reese is TOTALLY SCROOGED

Benefit Show Raises Fund for the Vermont Foodbank
a review by Yves Morrissette

Adam Reese, aka "Pickles," gave new meaning to *A Christmas Carol*. Layers upon layers of new meaning.

You might have thought the classics were written in stone, but Pickles took a sharp wit and chiseled some slight changes in this wonderful rendition of the Dickens tale. Sir Reese asked that all thoughts of Clinton, Lewinsky, Tripp, and Starr be left at the door, started his whirling imagination, and took a willing audience on a wild ride.

Totally Scrooged might have been a one-person show, but the whole original cast of characters was represented — slightly Pickled, of course. Try to picture Monica from *Touched by an Angel* as the ghost of Christmas past, Bernie Sanders filling in for the ghost of Christmas present, Freddie Prince as the voice of God or Marlon Brando as the ghost of Marley. Imagine Bob Cratchit with a passive-aggressive streak and a penchant for show tunes.

Actually, you should imagine all of the characters with a thing for show tunes. Throughout the program, Reese delighted with his renditions of many classic songs from stage and screen including 'Don't Cry for Me, Ebenezer,' 'I Could Have Danced All Night,' a holiday version of 'The Candy Man,' the theme from *Jaws*, and several selections from *The Wizard of Oz*.

A number of unexpected characters popped into the story as well. The Phantom of the Opera, Oliver, Sammy Davis, Jr. and Agnes, the nosey neighbor from *Bewitched* — or reasonable facsimiles — were among the dozens of cameos Reese threw in throughout the evening.

If you're with the program so far, then you'll also appreciate the roles of Dick Clark, Rosie O'Donnell, Ben and Jerry, Robin Williams, The Beatles, Shirley Temple, Bette Davis, Elmer Fudd, Laura Petrie, Julia Child, Billy Crystal, Joan Crawford, Donny and Marie, the Olsen Twins, Tiny Tim, Tiny Bubbles, Tiny Louise and ice skater Tiny Harding (the reason Tiny Tim is in leg irons). That is, if you can contain your laughter long enough to catch them all.

There were jokes tucked into every line, gesture and



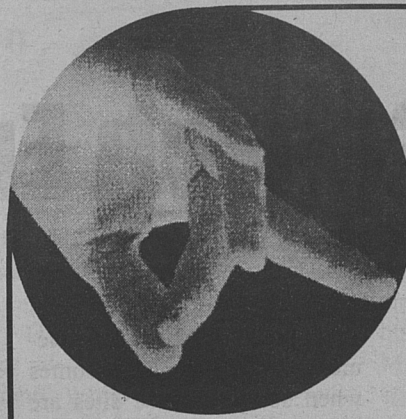
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prop, from Scrooge's meal of Bubble and Squeak to a chicken-choking scene to a unique Pickles-made ornament. What's more, Pickles' asides and transparent transitions made the ride even more side-splitting.

But despite the guffaws and belly laughs, Adam Reese showed a great deal of respect for the original Dickens tale. He did it in spirit, by making the performances a benefit for the Vermont Foodbank, and in word, by reminding the audi-

ence of the lesson that is still relevant today: keeping the holiday spirit throughout the year is the goal, and letting others into our hearts the key.

Employees of Scrup-tious donated their time to serve goodies provided by the restaurant's owner, Barbara Cook. The audience for the December 19 performance was treated to caroling by A Vocal Minority, Vermont's own gay men's choir, before and after the show. ▼



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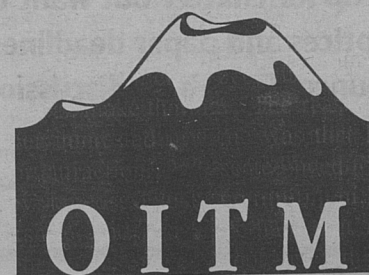
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