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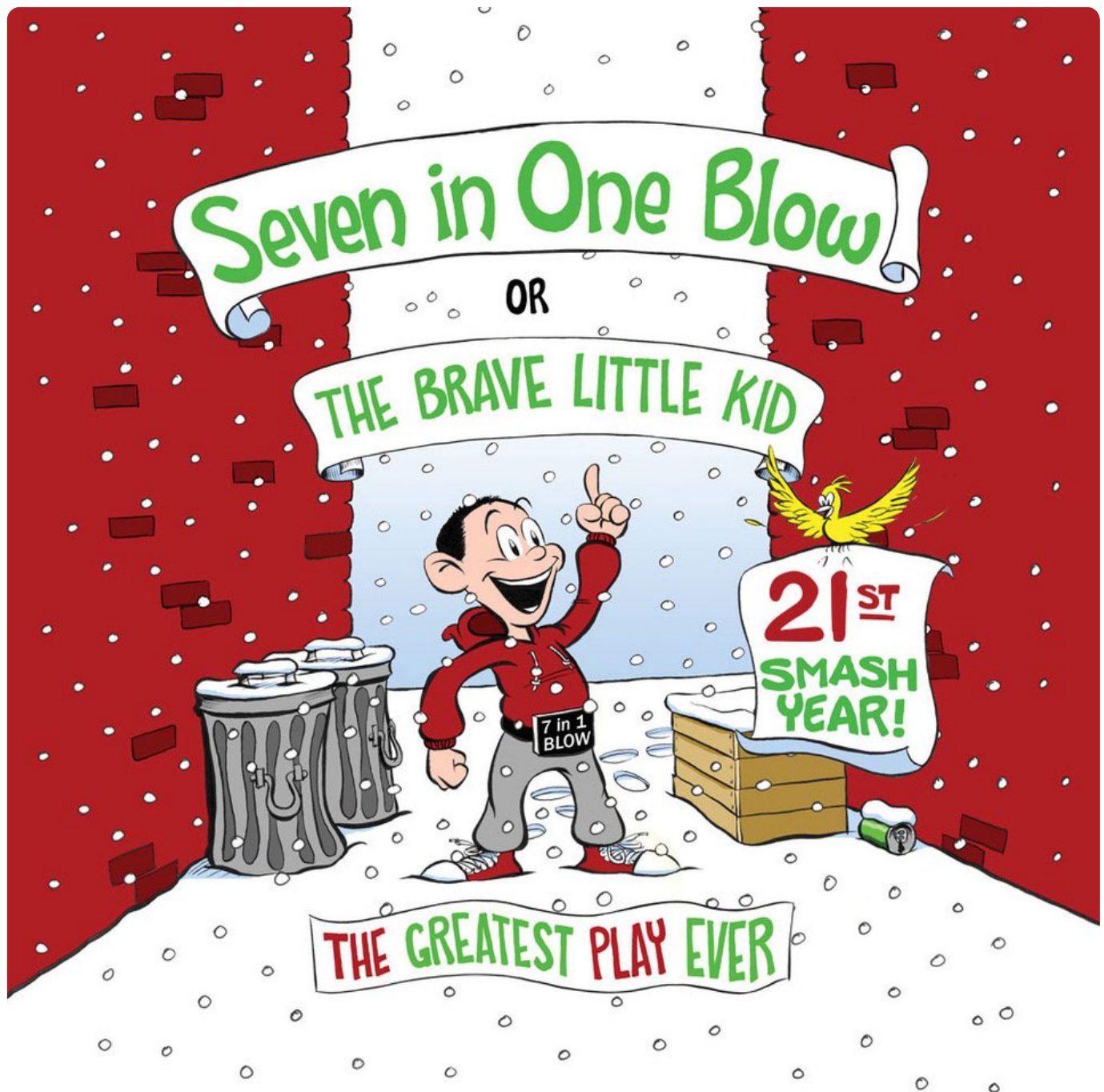
Spencer Aste's Seven Holiday Hits



Longtime NYC-based actor, tennis coach, Mormon-raised gay bon vivant Spencer Aste comes to us amid performing the children's holiday play, *Seven in One Blow*, or *The Brave Little Kid*.

He lives with his husband Erik Savage in Hudson Yards. Aste works with Axis Company to present this pay-what-you-choose production now in its 21st year. It's one of his favorite parts of the holiday season, along with the candy, holiday movies, and as always, his deep passion for tennis. And it's his first of seven things he's super queer for.





1. Seven in One Blow: This is the 13th year Aste has been featured in the cast of this classic fairy tale adapted from The Brothers Grimm. In the story, a city Kid kills seven flies with a single swat and makes a belt to commemorate it.

But others assume a different meaning and assign the Kid a host of difficult tasks. In this interactive show, the children learn that you don't always have to show how strong you are, that teasing can hurt someone just like you, and that even monsters need love.



Seven in One Blow, or The Brave Little Kid runs through December 18th (with all 12/10 proceeds going to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital) at [Axis Theatre](#), 1 Sheridan Square in NYC. Tickets are \$5-20.

GEORGE C. SCOTT

Charles Dickens'

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

REDISCOVER THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS SPIRIT!

2. A Christmas Carol featuring George C. Scott: “I like how it is so raw, and I remember as a kid how it was ingrained in my psyche,” he said. “I loved the idea of the redemption tale and I just loved Tiny Tim.

Shows with kids have always been something I love, because I feel like a big kid.” Spencer said he even played Young Scrooge as a grad school intern at the Denver Center in the ‘90s, with Tony Church of the Royal Shakespeare Company playing Scrooge. He has fond memories of being set atop roller blades designed to look like ice skates.

"WILLY WONKA & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY"



3. Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory: “Gene Wilder is very hands-on as an actor. He famously relied on improv to deliver his lines, then insisted they use that footage because there were certain things he wanted to do or say to make the film his own, despite what was in the book,” said Aste.



“And then there’s Charlie, a little kid from a poor family who has simple honesty and love for everyone, especially his Grandpa Joe. He has complete selflessness, like when he gives back the Everlasting Gobstopper; that makes me cry every time!”

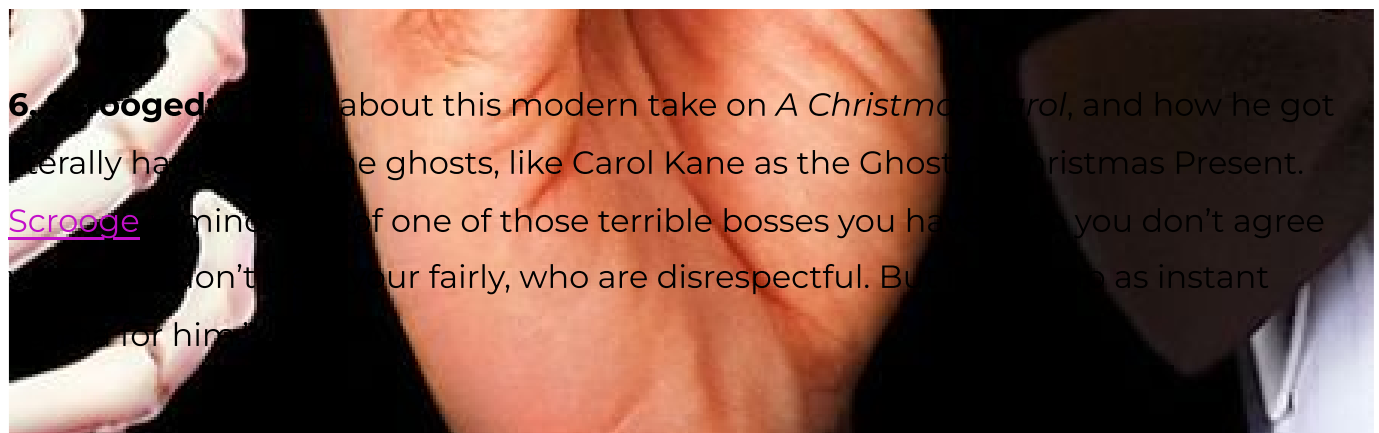


4. Candy Caramel Kitchen: “It’s my mom’s recipe and I’ve been making it for over 40 years,” he said. In the past, Aste’s caramel business was so booming that “it became a corporate business, and it was all I was doing. People wanted me to open a shop, but I wanted to act and teach tennis, so I scaled it back.” Now, he only makes caramels during the holidays, and only on demand. His original caramels are now supplemented by pecan caramels, and ones studded with dried cherries, pistachio, and white chocolate. There’s a two-box minimum at \$25-35 lb., and Aste will send them via USPS Priority Mail to your loved ones, complete with a small greeting card. Email spenceraste@hotmail.com



5. Tennis: “I love playing and teaching tennis. I was nine years old with a wooden racket when I started. When I was a kid I played tennis with Mike Dowse, who became CEO of USTA and Wilson. He was also a kid back then,” said Aste. These days, Aste gives lots of other kids tennis lessons, but can’t share their pix without parents’ permission. So instead, here’s a photo above of him and Ed Neppi, USTA CFO. Said Aste, “He’s openly gay and a huge theatre and tennis fan! I logged US Open matches for ESPN at Arthur Ashe Stadium.”





6. **Booged** is all about this modern take on *A Christmas Carol*, and how he got literally haunted by the ghosts, like Carol Kane as the Ghost of Christmas Present. Scrooge reminds me of one of those terrible bosses you have when you don't agree with them. They don't pay you fairly, who are disrespectful. But they're also as instant as instant for him.



7. Wake Up: Aste is preparing his solo show, *Wake Up* to debut at Axis Theatre next June. He said, "It's autobiographical and touches on so many things throughout my life: Being born and raised Mormon, coming out of the closet, dealing and using drugs, and my bike accident and coma in May 2015." Aste tried to follow in the footsteps of his older brothers by attending University of Utah, joining a fraternity, and getting a girlfriend. "I decided I was going to do everything I could do to be straight," said Aste. But the summer before he graduated in 1988, he did Summer

Stock at Creede Repertory Theatre in Colorado. He was cast in the play *Bus Stop*, which deals with loneliness, opposite openly gay Joel Farrell playing the lead, Bo Decker. All the feels followed. “For the first time in my life I was living somewhere where nobody knew me, and I was finally somewhere where I could come out of the closet. So I did!” He came out to Ferrell as they walked up the canyon during the cast party and later, he came out to his parents. “At first my dad said, ‘We had a hunch.’ But then it became, ‘You’re not really gay, it’s Satan at work.’ I went back to Utah and broke up with my girlfriend, and it became The Year I Secretly Went to Gay Bars.” Aste said it was very difficult to come out in the era of AIDS but remarked that when he returned to Utah for his 35th Class Reunion, everyone asked where his husband was. “It’s a whole different world now!” exclaimed Aste, adding that his family eventually “did learn to love and respect the queer me. Before my dad died in 1997, he was pretty sick so we went to Mexico as kind of a last time to vacation together. We were having lunch and a cute guy kept looking over at me. Dad said, ‘I think he likes you. You should go say hi.’ I think it was his way of embracing me and my sexual preference.”

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