

Licensing Production Packet  
Sample Script

# That's What Christmas Is About

The Miracle Behind A Charlie Brown  
Christmas Special

Mark Lewitt



# Licensing & Production Packet

**Title:** *That's What Christmas Is About – The Miracle Behind A Charlie Brown Christmas Special*

**Author:** Two Talents Studio

**Format:** Stage Play with Choir (Small Theater / School-Friendly)

**Length:** Approx. 60–75 minutes

**Target Audience:** Family / Community Theater / Educational Institutions

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## 1. Synopsis

### Short Version (for marketing):

A heartfelt, behind-the-scenes journey into the creation of *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, blending humor, history, and the timeless message of love and goodwill.

### Full Synopsis:

Set in the early 1960s, the play follows Charles M. Schulz, producer Lee Mendelson, and animator Bill Melendez as they race to create a Christmas special for television. Through creative debates, network pressures, and moments of doubt, the team holds fast to Schulz's vision of keeping the biblical heart of the story intact. Interwoven with live performances of classic carols by a choir, the show celebrates the miracle of artistic integrity and the enduring spirit of Christmas.

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## 2. Scene Breakdown

Act	Scene	Setting	Key Action	Choir Song Before Scene
I	1	Schulz's Studio	Schulz receives Coca-Cola call from Mendelson	O Little Town of Bethlehem
I	2	Brainstorming Table	Trio develops plot, tree idea, no laugh track, Scripture decision	God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen
I	3	Animators' Screening Room	Concerns about pacing; "hundred years" optimism	Away in a Manger
I	4	CBS Screening Room	Executives criticize; team defends vision	O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
II	5	Towle's Café	Mendelson fears failure: ratings reveal success	Silent Night
II	6	Final Stage Tableau	Luke 2:8–14 reading; Linus V.O.; minister's message; choir finale	Hark! The Herald Angels Sing – After Scene 6

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### 3. Character List – Spoken Roles Only

All characters deliver spoken dialogue. Musical elements are limited to choir performances before or after scenes.

Character	Description
Charles M. Schulz	Creator of <i>Peanuts</i> , thoughtful, principled
Lee Mendelson	Producer, pragmatic yet supportive
Bill Melendez	Animator, warm and humorous
CBS Executive(s)	Skeptical, business-first
Animator(s)	Mixed ensemble, one senior “hundred years” line
Daughter	Mendelson’s child, offers encouragement
Assistant	Brings ratings news
Child Reader	Reads Luke 2:8–14 in Scene 6
Minister	Gentle authority delivering closing message
Narrator	Guides the audience through the story
Ensemble Choir	Performs carols between scenes (no solo vocals tied to characters)

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### 4. Choir Song Cue Sheet

Song Title	Type	Performer(s)	Placement
O Little Town of Bethlehem	Traditional	Choir	Before Scene 1
God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen	Traditional	Choir	Before Scene 2
Away in a Manger	Traditional	Choir	Before Scene 3
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel	Traditional	Choir	Before Scene 4
Silent Night	Traditional	Choir	Before Scene 5
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	Traditional	Choir	After Scene 6 & Finale

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### 5. Minimal Set & Prop Requirements

#### Sets:

- Schulz’s Studio (desk, drawing board, lamp)
- Brainstorm Table (papers, pencils, coffee cups)
- Screening Room(s) (chairs, projector or implied projection)
- Towle’s Café (tables, chairs, counter)

- Final Stage Tableau (single mic, star backdrop/North Star lighting)

**Props:**

- Rotary phone
  - Sketch pads & pencils
  - Small Christmas tree (scraggly)
  - Script pages/storyboards
  - Choir folders
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## **6. Licensing Terms – Educational Performance Release**

- **Performance Rights:** Granted at no cost to [School Name] for non-commercial, educational performances.
  - **Royalty Fee: Waived** for this production.
  - **Credit:** May list *Two Talents Studio* on all programs, posters, and announcements.
  - **Integrity:** No alterations to script, Luke 2 text, or finale messaging without written permission.
  - **Tickets:** Performances should be free, or proceeds used solely for school programs/charitable causes.
  - **License Window:** Valid for agreed performance dates within the current academic year.
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## **7. Contact Information**

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## Sample Script Excerpt – Act I, Scenes 1 & 2

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### Scene 1 – Charles Schulz’s Drawing Studio

*Choir Song Before Scene 1: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”*

**Narrator:**

Charles Schulz is hard at work at his drawing board in his home studio, creating another installment of his famous *Peanuts* comic strip. Little did he know, a series of events was about to unfold that would lead to one of the greatest miracles in television history.

**Setting:**

A modest, warm studio filled with sketches of *Peanuts* characters, pencils, erasers, and comic strips in progress. Soft jazz hums in the background.

**Action & Dialogue:**

*(Phone rings. Schulz answers.)*

**Schulz:** Hello, this is Charles Schulz.

**Mendelson:** Hi, Charles! It’s Lee Mendelson. How are you?

**Schulz:** Lee! Good to hear from you. I’m doing well, just working on some new strips. What’s up?

**Mendelson:** I got a call from Coca-Cola today. Their Christmas special fell through, and they asked if we’d ever considered doing a Charlie Brown show. I said “Absolutely.”

**Schulz:** (laughs) Lee, why did you say that? We’ve never considered a Christmas show before and I don’t even have one written.

**Mendelson:** I know... but they want an outline by Monday. Will you do it?

**Schulz:** (pauses, thinking) Sure. Let’s give it a try.

**Mendelson:** Great! I’ll come up tomorrow with Bill Melendez. But Charles... it still needs to be done tomorrow.

**Schulz:** (laughs) Tomorrow? Alright, let’s get to work.

*(Lights fade as Schulz picks up his pencil again.)*

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### Scene 2 – Brainstorming Session

*Choir Song Before Scene 2: “God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”*

**Narrator:**

The next day, Schulz, Mendelson, and Melendez gather to bring the Christmas show to life.

**Setting:**

Schulz's studio, bustling with papers, pencils, and storyboards.

**Action & Dialogue:**

**Schulz:** We need a story that captures the essence of Christmas. Something simple, yet meaningful.

**Mendelson:** How about Charlie Brown searching for the true meaning of Christmas?

**Melendez:** And a scraggly little tree that blossoms with care.

**Schulz:** Yes. And Vince Guaraldi's jazz score.

**Mendelson:** We should add a laugh track.

**Schulz:** If you add a laugh track, I'm out of here.

**Melendez:** And Linus will quote the Gospel of Luke.

**Mendelson:** You want to quote the Bible in an animated special?

**Schulz:** If we don't do it, who will?

*(They nod, committed to the vision. Lights fade as they sketch and plan.)*

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