

2020-2021 Theatre Season


On the Air: Old Time Radio Plays Produced Live  
Blinn College Division of Visual/Performing Arts and Kinesiology  
Brenham Campus



# Miracle on 34th Street

## Resource Guide

This resource guide serves as an educational starting point to understanding and enjoying Miracle on 34th Street. With this in mind, please note that the interpretations of the theatrical work may differ from the original source content.



# Miracle on 34th Street

Based on the 1947 Film Released by 20th Century Fox  
Written and Directed by George Seaton

From the Story by Valentine Davies

Originally Produced by The Lux Radio Theatre  
on December 22, 1947.

Directed by

**Brad Ries**

Technical Theatre Direction by

**Kevin Patrick**

Costume, Makeup, and Hair by

**Jennifer Patrick**



# Synopsis

When a Macy's Department Store Santa Claus claims he is the real Kris Kringle, he winds up being put in an institute for the mentally insane. But with a little help from a lawyer friend of his, and a little girl's belief in the Christmas spirit, Kris is able to make a miracle happen right there in New York City. This Christmas tale is a beloved family classic that will melt even the most cynical of hearts.

This staged audio drama will be recorded  
and available for viewing by

**November 30, 2020**

## George Seaton

George Seaton was born on April 17, 1911 in Detroit, MI where he grew up. After high school, he auditioned for Jesse Bonstelle's drama school. She hired him for her stock company, and Seaton began his career as an actor. During this time, he worked as a voice actor on radio station WXYZ, and he wrote several plays. One of works was read by an executive at MGM who offered him a contract. Unhappy about being restricted to writing comedies, Seaton left MGM in 1937, and he went to Columbia Pictures where he was credited on several scripts. In the early 1940s, he joined 20th Century Fox where he specialized in musicals and comedies. By the end of his career, he had worked as a screenwriter, playwright, film director, and producer.

He lost his battle with cancer on July 28, 1979.

## Valentine Davies

Born on August 25, 1905, Valentine Davies was raised in New York City. He graduated from the University of Michigan where he honed in on his writing skills. He later attended Yale Drama School as a graduate student. After graduating from Yale, Davies moved to Hollywood to begin his career as a screenwriter. During the course of his career, he wrote several Broadway plays, many screenplays, and he served as president of the Screen Writers Guild and General Chairman of the Academy Awards program. He wrote the story for the 1947 film **Miracle on 34th Street**, which was directed by George Seaton. Davies also did a novelization of the story, which was published by Harcourt Brace & Company in conjunction with the film's release. **Miracle on 34th Street** earned him an Academy Award for Best Story.

Davies died on July 23, 1961.



# Other Adaptations of *Miracle on 34th Street*

## Radio

The **Lux Radio Theater** produced an adaptation of the work in 1947, and again in 1948. The work was also adapted into a half-hour radio play for two broadcasts of the **Screen Director's Playhouse** in 1950. In all of these productions, Kris correctly cites James Monroe as the President for whom Daniel D. Tompkins was the Vice-President.

## Theatre

A 1963 Broadway musical version, entitled **Here's Love**, was written by Meredith Willson of **The Music Man** fame. The story was adapted into a stage play by playwrights Will Severin, Patricia Di Benedetto Snyder and John Vreeke in 2000. The work was again adapted for the stage in 2016 and was billed as a live musical radio play. This latest version was written by Lance Arthur Smith and Jon Lorenz.

## Television

**The Miracle on 34th Street** was a 1955 one-hour television adaptation of the movie. This version did not show the drunken Santa, and it was originally aired as an episode of **The 20th Century Fox Hour**. Later, comedian actor Ed Wynn played Kris in a television adaptation of the film in 1959. A 1973 television version was adapted by Jeb Rosebrook from the George Seaton screenplay, and directed by Fielder Cook. This would prove to be the final version in which the department store was actually Macy's.

## Puppets

The flagship Macy's Department Store at Herald Square in New York City featured a 30-minute puppet version of the story within its Santaland display in 2009. The display featured the voice talents of Broadway stars Brian Stokes Mitchell and Victoria Clark.

# Safety is Our First Concern

Staged radio plays are performed straight out, into microphones, and do not regularly involve actors conversing face-to-face with each other.

All shows will be produced with in-person rehearsals using appropriate PPE.

All shows will be performed with an adherence to social distancing of actors (a minimum of 6' away from each other) and remote audiences.

Actors will not share microphones, costumes, or props during a taping session.

Performances will be filmed in a closed studio environment without live audiences.

# Sources

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- \*Clark, A. E. (1979). The New York Times. "George Seaton, Director, Dead: Got Two Oscars for Screenplays. Also Directed 'Country Girl', 'A Change of Plans'." July 29th Edition.
- \*Colton, H. (1948). The New York Times. "George Seaton on Top: Being an Introduction to a Modest and Successful Movie Writer." November 14th Edition.
- \*Internet Source, [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org), "A Film Clip from 'Miracle on 34th Street.'"
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- \*Variety Magazine. (1947). "Top Grossers of 1947." January 7th Edition.