

SKYLINE

November 18 - November 24, 2020

Shopping local and for a few good causes

By: Felicia Dechter

Oh what fun... it was to watch Gold Coaster Denise McGowan Tracy's lovely kiddie masterpiece, "Eleanor's Very Merry Christmas Wish—The Musical," from the comfort of my own home during a recent virtual press screening.

"Eleanor" is the touching tale of a rag doll named Eleanor who lives on one very enchanting North Pole. Although she adores her family, which includes Santa, Mrs. "Cookie" Claus, Clara Claus, and the elves Twinkle, Sprinkle, and Sparkle, Eleanor truly longs for a best friend and home of her own, and that is her very merry Christmas wish. The story, which McGowan Tracy wrote a handful of years ago, is of how Eleanor's Christmas wish comes true.

I saw this sweet show premiere last year at the theater, and I wondered how and if its magic would transfer virtually. Would the amazingly beautiful costumes look as colorful and cheery? How would the songs come out? Would the story somehow get lost in translation?

What I found was that although it wasn't a live production, I still thoroughly enjoyed "Eleanor," as did my five-year-old granddaughter, Sydney. When I asked how she liked it, Syd replied, "It's good." I had to agree. (And this year, you can get a cool Eleanor toy set too. Read on.)

Based on the heartfelt book of the same name authored by McGowan Tracy, I would recommend this charming familyfriendly production to anyone looking for something to do with the kids that doesn't involve going out. "Eleanor" will be available to stream Nov. 27 through Dec. 27 for \$25 per household through InPlayer. Not only are you showing your little ones a locally-produced holiday show, but you're also supporting the work of McGowan Tracy, who has given her all to this city as an entertainer. As executive producer and creator of the show, McGowan Tracy's wish, "is to keep the magic of the holidays sparkling in the eyes of children no matter what challenges we face this year."

There's also two immersive Eleanor's Very Merry Christmas Party in a Box gift set options, which are shipped from The North Pole's special Chicagobased distribution center. The Super Fun Sprinkle & Sparkle Box (\$45) includes a soft-cover copy of the book that inspired the show, a 2020 Eleanor Christmas keepsake ornament, Eleanor's own stationery notepad and pencil for children to write their letters to Santa, and four holiday fun hats. The Super Duper Fun Eleanor Box (\$60) features all items in the Sprinkle & Sparkle Box with a hardcover book, cookie cutter with recipe card, and Twinkle's favorite reindeer ring toss game.



It's a great way to have a good time and also shop locally. And congrats to McGowan Tracy because the reindeer ring toss was recently featured on "The Today Show," as a top toy of the season! More information can be found at www.eleanorwish.com.