

PRESS KIT



SIGHT & SOUND
FILMS

I HEARD THE BELLS

THE INSPIRING TRUE STORY BEHIND THE
BELOVED CHRISTMAS CAROL

IN THEATERS DECEMBER 2022

WWW.IHEARDTHEBELLSMOVIE.COM

PRESS
RELEASE

SIGHT & SOUND™

FATHOM
EVENTS 

Sight & Sound Partners with Fathom Events on The Release of Debut Feature Film, 'I Heard the Bells', Coming to Select Theaters this December

The True Story Behind the Beloved Christmas Carol and its author, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow coming to The Big Screen

LANCASTER, Pa., September 15, 2022 – Following five decades of producing spectacular family-friendly entertainment experiences on the live stage, Sight & Sound recently unveiled the newest expansion to its brand, Sight & Sound Films. Today, the ministry has announced details of its highly anticipated first movie, "I Heard The Bells," which releases December 1 in partnership with Fathom Events.



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PRESS
RELEASE

SIGHT & SOUND™

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Set in the 1860s, the film takes viewers on a journey through the life of American-poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who leads an idyllic life – until the day his world is shattered by tragedy. With a nation divided by Civil War and his family torn apart, Longfellow puts down his pen, silenced by grief. However, it's the sound of Christmas morning that reignites the poet's lost voice as he discovers resounding hope and a rekindled faith.

“As one of America's best-loved and recognized poets, Longfellow was the voice of culture in that moment of history,” said Josh Enck, President and Chief Story Officer of Sight & Sound who also served as director for the film. “And as Sight & Sound's first feature, it embodies our mission to tell true stories about historical figures whose lives changed the world because Christ first changed them.”

After a devastating loss that leaves Longfellow bereft, he eventually remembers where true hope can be found, finding his faith once again. "I Heard the Bells" is an inspiring story of redemption and rekindled faith.

“We're honored to partner with Fathom Events to bring this redemptive story of faith to movie theaters this Christmas season,” said Enck. “We can't wait for people to experience this inspiring true story on the big screen!”

VIEW TRAILER HERE: <https://www.iheardthebellsmovie.com>.

As part of the exclusive Fathom presentation, moviegoers are encouraged to stay after the film for a special discussion with the cast and director.

Tickets for “I Heard The Bells” can be purchased at [Fathom Events](#) or at participating theater box offices. For a complete list of theater locations visit the [Fathom Events website](#) (theaters are subject to change).

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PRESS
RELEASE

SIGHT & SOUND™



About Sight & Sound

Sight & Sound® is a ministry on a mission to create spectacular entertainment experiences for the whole family. Since its beginning as a traveling multimedia show in 1976, Sight & Sound has inspired over 30 million people with stories of faith. Today, Sight & Sound owns and operates two live theater locations, immersing audiences in state-of-the-art original productions. Sight & Sound TV launched in 2020, and this online streaming platform has since welcomed a global virtual audience from over 175 countries around the world. Most recently, expansion into feature films was announced, with a first-ever theatrical release set for cinemas nationwide in December 2022. For more information, visit sight-sound.com

About Fathom Events

Fathom is a recognized leader in the entertainment industry as one of the top distributors of content to movie theaters in North America. Owned by AMC Entertainment Inc. (NYSE: AMC); Cinemark Holdings, Inc. (NYSE: CNK); and Regal, a subsidiary of the Cineworld Group (LSE: CINE.L), Fathom operates the largest cinema distribution network, delivering a wide variety of programming and experiences to cinema audiences in the top U.S. markets and more than 45 countries. For more information, visit FathomEvents.com.

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FACT SHEET

Production Company: Sight & Sound Films™

Writer & Director: Josh Enck

Screenplay: Sight & Sound Films

Distributor: Fathom Events

Lead Cast: Stephen Atherholt (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow), Jonathan Blair (Charley Longfellow), Rachel Day Hughes (Fanny Longfellow)

Release Date: In select theaters starting December 1, 2022

Rating: NR

Run Time: 110 minutes

Original Soundtrack: Sight & Sound®

Film Location: Lancaster, PA

Official Website: iheardthebellsmovie.com

Facebook: facebook.com/bellsmovie

Instagram: instagram.com/sightandsoundfilms

IMDB: imdb.com/title/tt21084334

Social Hashtags: #IHeardtheBells, #SightandSoundFilms

Synopsis

Sight & Sound Films' first feature cinema, "I Heard the Bells," shares the inspiring true story behind the famous Christmas carol and its author, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Known as America's Poet, Longfellow leads an idyllic life – until the day his world is shattered by tragedy. With a nation divided by Civil War and his family torn apart, Henry puts down his pen, silenced by grief. But it's the sound of Christmas morning that reignites the poet's lost voice as he discovers the resounding hope of rekindled faith.

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SIGHT & SOUND BACKGROUNDER

SIGHT & SOUND™

Sight & Sound® is a multi-generational, family-run ministry on a mission to bring the Bible to life through live theater, television and film. What started more than 45 years ago as a traveling multimedia show has today become a destination for over 30 million people.

With a decade of operating two theaters, producing and premiering a brand-new show every other year, and designing each production to travel between Lancaster and Branson, Sight & Sound is seasoned in taking the most powerful stories from the pages of Scripture and bringing them to life on stage.



In June 2022, Sight & Sound announced the newest expansion to its ministry, Sight & Sound Films, taking their craft from the big stage to the big screen. With their long-standing team of talented writers, actors, engineers, builders and even animal trainers, Sight & Sound Films will focus on stories of historical figures who made a significant impact on history because of their faith.

Sight & Sound Films' first feature cinema, "I Heard the Bells," will release in movie theaters December 1-8, 2022 in partnership with Fathom Events. The film will share the inspiring true story behind the famous Christmas carol and the life of its author, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

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CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Stephen Atherholt

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



Stephen Atherholt has always had a passion for performing. After receiving a BA in Theatre from Indiana University of PA, He went on to pursue his Master of Fine Arts from Virginia Commonwealth University. In 2001, Stephen joined the Sight & Sound Theatres cast for the production ABRAHAM & SARAH and was on stage in various roles for more than 10 years. He currently serves as the Director of Musical Theatre at Lancaster Bible College, in addition to teaching Improv, On Camera Acting and Voiceover at the Sight & Sound Conservatory.

When presented with the opportunity to play the role of America's poet in Sight & Sound's first feature, Stephen was excited to venture back into the world of performing. "It is this journey of real honest struggle and transformation that makes playing Henry Longfellow such a delight."

Stephen, his wife Jessica, and their two children reside in Lancaster, PA.

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CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Jonathan Blair

Charley Longfellow



Originally from Southern California, Jonathan Blair is an award-winning actor and director who has received honors from places like the Riverside International Film Festival and the Los Angeles Film Festival.

Jonathan has been blessed to share his work with audiences around the world, from New York City, to Seattle, to Puerto Rico, the UK, and Southeast Asia. He has been performing with Sight and Sound Theatres since 2017, appearing in MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS, JESUS, QUEEN ESTHER, and DAVID. He is thrilled to return to the screen with Sight & Sound Films' debut feature, "I Heard the Bells."

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CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Rachel Day Hughes

Fanny Longfellow



Rachel Day Hughes joined the Sight & Sound Theatres cast in 2013 after graduating from Liberty University with a degree in Theater Performance. She has since performed in MOSES, MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS, JESUS and QUEEN ESTHER. She also serves as the Voice and Speech Instructor at the Sight & Sound Conservatory. Rachel is thrilled to take her love of performing to the big screen as she steps into her first feature film role as Fanny Longfellow in, "I Heard the Bells."

Originally from Richmond Virginia, Rachel now resides in Lancaster with her two children and her husband Caleb.

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LEADERSHIP BIOGRAPHIES

Matthew Neff

Chief Executive Officer,
Sight & Sound Theatres



Matt Neff joined Sight & Sound in 1994 as a stagehand. A few years later, after serving in the Finance and Risk Management departments, he assumed leadership of the Human Resources team. Eventually, Matt took on the role of Chief Administration Officer, accelerating Sight & Sound's production process to create new shows.

In 2015, Matt assumed his current duties as CEO, using his passion for organizational development and cultural alignment to further solidify Sight & Sound's vision, creating space for the Ministry to expand into new horizons.

Matt is married to Amy, 3rd daughter of founders Glenn and Shirley Eshelman, and has played an active role in the strategic planning of the long-term structure of the family-owned business. Matt and Amy reside in Lancaster, PA with their four children.

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LEADERSHIP BIOGRAPHIES

Josh Enck
Writer & Director,
Sight & Sound Theatres



Josh Enck joined Sight & Sound in 1995 as a stagehand with a passion for storytelling. Today, he serves as President and Chief Story Officer, responsible for spearheading the unique creative process from production and product development to leading Sight & Sound into the next chapter. In addition to his executive duties, Josh produced and directed six Sight & Sound stage productions, including the record-breaking show JESUS. He pioneered Sight & Sound's initiative to begin filming stage productions for wider distribution in 2004. Since 2011 he has led the vision to expand Sight & Sound's ministry beyond the stage, into movie theatres nationwide and with the launch of Sight & Sound TV a digital streaming channel with viewers from over 165 countries from around the world.

Today, Josh is forging the way for Sight & Sound's newest endeavor, feature films. Enck not only wrote, but also directed and produced Sight & Sound Film's very first feature, I HEARD THE BELLS coming to movie theatres this December.

Josh is married to Kristen, the 4th daughter of Sight & Sound founders Glenn and Shirley Eshelman. He and Kristen reside in Lancaster, PA with their four children.

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LEADERSHIP BIOGRAPHIES

Katie Miller

Director Marketing and Communications
Sight & Sound Theatres



As the oldest grandchild of Sight & Sound’s founders, Katie Miller first stepped onto the stage when she was four years old, making her the first member of the family’s third generation to be a part of the ministry.

Throughout her 30-year tenure, Katie has served in various capacities within the company, including human resources, marketing and business development. As Director of Marketing and Communications, Katie is a member of the Brand Development team, bringing alignment to each of the brand’s extensions through marketing, advertising, public relations and corporate communications. She also serves as primary spokesperson for the company, including on-camera host for Sight & Sound TV’s live broadcast events.

Katie continues to connect Sight & Sound’s past to its future, introducing audience members from around the world to the Sight & Sound story. Katie and her husband, Brian, reside in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, raising their three children—now fourth-generation family members acting on the Sight & Sound stage.

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BEHIND THE SCENES IMAGES AND DETAILS



Sight & Sound Films recreated the bustle of an 1800's train station at Strasburg Railroad, located in Lancaster, PA. Recognized as the oldest continuously operating railway in the western hemisphere, this Pennsylvania station served as the perfect set location.

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BEHIND THE SCENES IMAGES AND DETAILS



A replica of the New Hope Chapel was resurrected on the Sight & Sound backlot in just three months.

Sight & Sound's theater productions are well known for the use of live animals on stage, and this first feature film is no exception.

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BEHIND THE SCENES IMAGES AND DETAILS



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was well known for his signature hair and beard. Sight & Sound's dedicated team of wig technicians and makeup artists spent countless hours with the leading actor to carefully recreate Henry's iconic features.

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BEHIND THE SCENES IMAGES AND DETAILS



As I Heard the Bells is set in the mid 1800's, it was important to the filmmakers that the costumes were accurate for the time period. With countless hours spent researching and designing, the results are truly a masterpiece.

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BEHIND THE SCENES
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SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

About “I Heard the Bells”:

- Why did you choose “I Heard the Bells” as your first film release?
- What are the primary themes that run throughout the film?
- What lesser-known facts about the life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow are portrayed in the film?
- What aspect of the film do you think will resonate with audiences most?
- Why do you think it’s important for uplifting films like “I Heard the Bells” to be made?
- What film will follow “I Heard the Bells?”

About “Sight & Sound Films:

- What is the purpose and vision behind Sight & Sound Films?
- How is Sight & Sound uniquely prepared to produce films?
- What impact are you hoping to make through Sight & Sound Films?
- In what ways is Sight & Sound Films a nod to the foundation of the ministry more than 40 years ago?
- What other true stories of historical figures does Sight & Sound Films plan to bring to the big screen in the future?

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