

# million dollar quartet

BOOK BY COLIN ESCOTT AND FLOYD MUTRUX  
ORIGINAL CONCEPT AND DIRECTION  
BY FLOYD MUTRUX  
INSPIRED BY ELVIS PRESLEY, JOHNNY CASH,  
JERRY LEE LEWIS, AND CARL PERKINS

MAY 11 – JULY 9  
STANLEY INDUSTRIAL ALLIANCE STAGE



**ARTSCLUB**  
ALIVE ON THREE STAGES

**BILL'S NOTES**

When I announced our production of Million Dollar Quartet last year, one of our board members, John Dawson, gave me the CD of the actual recording that took place on December 4, 1956, at Sun Records Studio in Memphis, Tennessee—which I had not heard previously. The session featured, for the only time, four musicians who would overturn what was considered popular music in the 1950s and who would become some of the biggest stars in the business: Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins. A famous picture of the quartet was taken by the local newspaper photographer who was called in to Sun Studios by the owner, Sam Phillips, to capture this unique moment. One of the endearing aspects of this show is that it reveals the four young musicians as fun-loving guys who enjoyed singing all the country and gospel tunes they had grown up with, together.

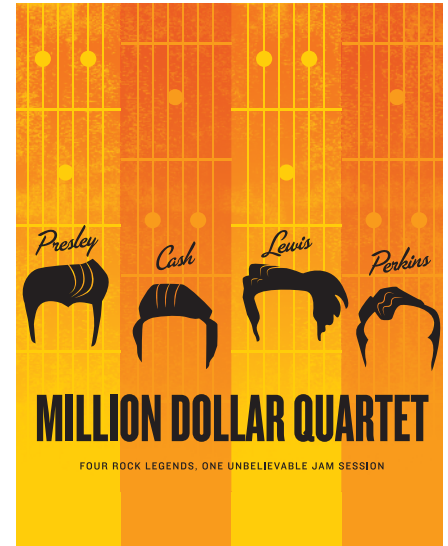


There is no denying the power of the songs that were chosen for this musical, even though during the actual session, most of what we hear on the CD are snippets of numbers rather than full renditions. The songs represent youth and vitality—a sense of innocence and the future beckoning. I see the same energy and passion in our cast: Erik Fraser Gow as Presley, Steven Greenfield as Lewis, Kale Penny as Perkins, and Jonas Shandel as Cash. Joined by Mathew Baker and Todd Biffard as the musicians who accompanied these four, Lauren Jackson as Elvis's girlfriend, and Graham Coffeng as Sam Phillips—the man who gave the famous four their start and welcomed them to Sun Studios on that auspicious day.

Bill Miller  
Artistic Managing Director

## SYNOPSIS (SPOILER ALERT!)

As the play opens, it's December 4, 1956, in Memphis, Tennessee, home to Sun Records, the small company that brought Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, and Jerry Lee Lewis to national fame; on this date, all four were together in the studio. Immediately, we see the four of them play Perkins's "Blue Suede Shoes" to open the show—a preview of what's to come. Then, Sun's founder, Sam Phillips, introduces himself to the audience. He explains that Elvis, Sun's biggest star, has left Sun to sign with RCA, but now RCA is trying to enlist Phillips himself to come to New York City and work exclusively with Elvis.



After this direct speech to the audience, Phillips talks to the musicians assembled in the studio, a drummer called Fluke and Carl's brother, Jay, a bassist. They are there for Carl's recording session, but Carl has not yet shown up. Phillips mentions that Elvis is in town and plans to come by the studio. Phillips remarks on how quickly everyone's gone from making four dollars to play shows to owning "Cadillacs and diamond rings," but Jerry, as he enters, contradicts this, saying that he has a "broke-down Ford" and needs a loan because the price of gas has gone up. Phillips promises his latest star-in-the-making that he'll soon come into his fortune. As they wait for Carl, Jerry launches into "Real Wild Child." In a flashback, Phillips recalls the day Jerry first showed up at Sun, having come "all the way from Ferriday, Louisiana." Phillips asks him where his guitar is, but Jerry explains that his specialty is the piano, not the guitar. Jerry plays for Phillips, who realizes instantly that he's found his next great talent.

Carl enters, and Jerry introduces himself to him. Carl thinks he's just a back-up piano player, but Phillips insists that he's "got a real good feelin' about this one." They start recording Perkins's song "Matchbox." After the first verse, Carl plays a guitar solo, but Jerry intrudes with a showy solo of his own, on piano. Carl yells at him to stop playing, and to stop trying to stand out on his record. Phillips tries to ease the tension, telling Carl that Jerry's "just tryin' to keep his phone connected."

He mentions that Johnny is also coming by the studio soon. Phillips is going to “surprise” Johnny, who has recently gained fame through several hits, with a new contract that he hopes he will sign. The musicians attempt another take of “Matchbox,” but as Jerry instantly begins hammering away on his piano, Carl suggests that they take a break from working on that track. He instructs Jerry to play maracas on the song, rather than piano. They play another song, “Who Do You Love?” As they play, Phillips flashes back to the night when he first met Carl. The young guitarist said that he had a song he’d like to perform for him, called “Blue Suede Shoes.” He says that he learned to play guitar from “an old colored man across the field” from the one his parents worked as sharecroppers, in Jackson, Tennessee. Perkins plays a hillbilly-type guitar lick, but Phillips tells him, instead, to play a blues riff, as he would have learned it from his black mentor. When he does, it’s more distinctive and impressive. Phillips tells us that he signed Carl and recorded “Blue Suede Shoes,” which went number one on the pop, blues, and country charts; now they’re working on a follow-up hit.

As they finish “Who Do You Love?,” Johnny enters the studio, greets Carl and Phillips, and introduces himself to Jerry, who, in turn, introduces himself as “the muthathumpin’est piana man you ever seen.” Jerry mentions that his mom loves “Folsom Prison Blues,” because it reminds her of his dad, and Phillips urges Johnny to play this recent hit. Reluctantly, he does, with Carl and the band. Phillips now recalls his first encounter with Johnny, who had just left the Air Force and wanted to record “sacred songs.” Phillips encouraged him instead to stick to secular, “sinner” songs, and Johnny’s recording career took off from there. Phillips says that he knows other record labels are interested in signing him given his recent success, but he hopes Johnny will still be grateful for having given him his break in the industry and will accordingly stick with Sun. As Johnny ends “Folsom Prison Blues,” Elvis enters with a girlfriend, Dyanne. Elvis greets everyone, and introduces Dyanne as an aspiring singer who’s been “tearin’ up the Hollywood strip.” Elvis hands Phillips an early Christmas present, a bottle of single-malt Scotch whiskey. They encourage Dyanne to perform something, and she sings “Fever.” All are impressed.

Elvis admits that sometimes he wishes he could just come back to Sun Records, even though the money he earned there was far more modest than what he’s making now at RCA and in Hollywood movies. Elvis reflects that when he first came to Sun, he was singing versions of Dean Martin songs—the quartet does a quick, impromptu rendition of Martin’s “Memories Are Made of This”—but Phillips helped him find his own unique voice and sound. In a flashback, Elvis performs his early hit “That’s All Right” as an audition for Phillips, who realizes that Elvis might be the key in selling black music to white youth.

Since it’s nearing Christmas, the musicians perform “Away in the Manger,” but conflict emerges when it comes up in conversation that Elvis got his big, national break on the Ed Sullivan Show performing “Blue Suede Shoes.” Now, Carl complains, people think that he’s covering an Elvis track when he performs his own song. Carl storms off, and Elvis follows him to try to smooth things over. Phillips talks to Johnny about his enormous success, but he replies that he hasn’t seen Vivian, his then-wife, for a long time because he’s been so busy. Johnny attempts to excuse himself, saying that he needs to spend some time with his kids. He is trying to tell Phillips something that is clearly weighing on his mind, but Phillips keeps cutting him off. Jerry begins to play Chuck Berry’s “Brown-Eyed Handsome Man.” Carl joins him on guitar. After, they all speak highly of Berry’s skills as a songwriter. Jerry tries to flirt with Dyanne, but Elvis brushes him off. Jerry mentions that, though he’s just 20, he’s already had two wives—a hint of the scandal that will soon beset the rising star and stall his career.

Phillips suggests that Johnny play one of the “old spirituals you’re always hittin’ on me to record”; this may be a mea culpa of sorts, as Phillips, to Johnny’s chagrin, has consistently discouraged him from recording religious songs, contending that young rock and roll fans won’t buy such records. They play “Down by the Riverside.” Dyanne speaks with Phillips, and tries to convince him to come to RCA, confiding that Elvis feels “lost” without him. He tells her that he’s still on the fence about whether to accept RCA’s offer. He invites Dyanne to see how the recording process works at Sun, as Johnny performs “Sixteen Tons,” which transitions into “My Babe” with Carl leading on vocals and Johnny backing him up. After this, Carl and Johnny speak in private, outside; the latter admits that he’s already committed to signing with Columbia Records and is dreading breaking this news to Phillips. When they come back in the studio, they join Elvis on a rendition of “Long Tall Sally.” Elvis in particular is visibly enjoying himself.

The discussion among the musicians turns to personal tragedies: Johnny, Jerry, and Elvis have all had siblings die young. On this somber note, they play a version of “Funeral March” and then “Peace in the Valley.” When religion comes up in their subsequent discussion, Jerry insists that rock and roll is “temptation, fornication, and damnation, in that order.” Phillips convinces Johnny to play another song, “I Walk the Line.” Dyanne joins in, transitioning to “I Hear You Knockin’.” After these songs, Phillips suddenly pitches a new contract to Johnny, in front of everyone. Johnny awkwardly has to tell Phillips that he has already signed to Columbia. Phillips is dejected and angry, lashing out at Johnny for greedily prioritizing money over loyalty. Nevertheless, Phillips resolves that Sun Records will still be fine, on the strength of Jerry and another up-and-comer, Roy Orbison. Jerry shows his stuff on “Great

Balls of Fire.” Phillips laments to Dyanne that he discovers and launches the careers of artists like Elvis and Johnny, then they move on to other, bigger labels. Dyanne reminds him that those labels are only copying what Phillips has mastered, in pioneering the sound of rock and roll.

Phillips addresses the audience, explaining that he decided not to go to RCA because he still felt personally committed to what he’d created at Sun and wanted to make instinctive decisions on his own, rather than answer to big-label bosses. Elvis proposes a toast to Phillips as “the Father of Rock and Roll.” They all raise their glasses in appreciation. Phillips tells the audience that while things turned out well for all assembled, they were never all under the same roof again after that night in late 1956. All reprise “Down by the Riverside.” For their curtain calls, Elvis performs “Hound Dog”; Johnny sings “Ghost Riders”; Carl does “See You Later, Alligator”; and Jerry finishes with “Whole Lotta Shakin’ Goin’ On,” which everyone then joins in on. Finally, after everyone exits, Phillips returns to announce, “Ladies and gentleman, Elvis has left the building.”

## CHARACTERS

### Sam Phillips

The founder of Sun Studios and Sun Records, Phillips was instrumental in discovering and promoting some of early rock and roll’s greatest stars

### Carl Perkins

A guitar player and singer, who had a recent chart-topping hit with “Blue Suede Shoes.” Perkins is 24 years old and in search of a follow-up hit.

### Jerry Lee Lewis

A virtuoso 20-year-old piano player and singer recently signed to Sun Records and set to be Phillips’ next major star.

### Johnny Cash

Another Phillips discovery, who has achieved significant fame on the strength of hits like “Folsom Prison Blues” and “I Walk the Line.” Cash, 24, is about to leave Sun Records to sign with the larger Columbia Records.

### Elvis Presley

The biggest star to emerge from Sun Records, though Presley, still just 21, has since moved on to RCA and begun to appear in Hollywood movies.

### Dyanne

Elvis’s current girlfriend, an aspiring singer whom he seems to have met in Hollywood.

### Brother Jay Perkins

Carl’s brother, a skilled bass player.

### Fluke

A drummer recording with Perkins.

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

“Blue Suede Shoes”

“Real Wild Child”

“Matchbox”

“Who Do You Love?”

“Folsom Prison Blues”

“Fever”

“Memories Are Made of This”

“That’s All Right”

“Brown Eyed Handsome Man”

“Down by the Riverside”

“Sixteen Tons”

“My Babe”

“Long Tall Sally”

“Peace in the Valley”

“I Walk the Line”

“I Hear You Knockin’”

“Party”

“Great Balls of Fire”

“Down by the Riverside (Reprise)”

“Hound Dog”

“Ghost Riders”

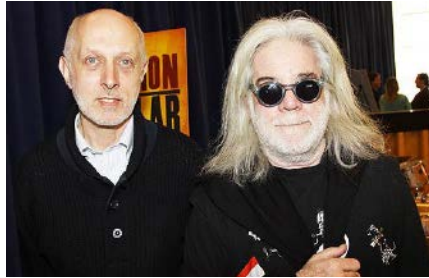
“See You Later, Alligator”

“Whole Lotta Shakin’ Goin’ On”



## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHTS

**Colin Escott** (left) is a rock and roll historian, regarded as the foremost authority on Sun Records. He wrote the official history of the record label in 1975, and has since released revised editions of that book. He has also published a biography of Hank Williams and a history of the Grand Ole Opry. **Floyd Mutrux** has served as a writer, director, and producer for both stage and screen. His films include *Aloha*, *Bobby Rose* (1975), and *The Hollywood Knights* (1980), both written and directed by Mutrux. Escott and Mutrux joined their respective skills to create the stage musicals *Baby It's You!* and *Million Dollar Quartet*. The latter initially premiered in Florida in 2006 before debuting on Broadway in 2010 and earning Tony Award nominations for Best Musical and Best Book of a Musical.



## SAM PHILLIPS: ROCK AND ROLL'S FOUNDING FATHER

Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Roy Orbison are household names, synonymous with rock and roll itself. Sam Phillips is decidedly less well-known than the huge stars with whom he worked, and whose careers he helped to initiate through his studio and record label. Indeed, the story of Phillips and Sun Records are deeply intertwined with the history of American rock and pop music. *Million Dollar Quartet* is a lively, recreated snapshot of Phillips' central role in that history. This brief essay is intended as a supplement to that snapshot, providing an overview of Phillips' eventful life and career.

As the play's Phillips informs the audience, he was born Samuel Cornelius Phillips, on January 5, 1923, in Florence, Alabama. Phillips' parents were impoverished tenant farmers, who enlisted their young son to help pick cotton in the fields. Later in life, Phillips recalled the songs sung by black labourers, working alongside him and his parents in the fields, informing, from an early age, his sense of popular music—that is, a music of the people. The Phillips family was hit hard by the Great Depression, and soon after that Sam's father died, prompting the young Phillips to drop out of high school and work odd jobs to support his remaining family.

From jobs in a grocery store and a funeral parlour, Phillips moved on to radio, working as a DJ at a station in nearby Muscle Shoals, Alabama. This experience made a significant impact on Phillips, as WLAY, the AM radio station at which he worked, was an “open” station, playing music by both black and white artists. This, coupled with Phillips' memory of the black farm labourers singing as they worked, served to shape Phillips' distinctive vision for an American popular music that dissolved and transcended racial boundaries.

This conception of popular music's blurry boundaries stayed with Phillips as he moved on to Memphis, Tennessee, where he opened the Memphis Recording Service in 1950. While Phillips focused on attracting up-and-coming amateur musicians to record at his studio, he drew such talents as blues artists B.B. King and Howlin' Wolf. It was from this small studio that Phillips started his own record label, Sun, founded in 1952. What some historians now consider the first rock and roll record, “Rocket 88,” by Jackie Brenston and His Delta Cats, was recorded and distributed by Phillips in the early days of Sun Records.

It was Elvis Presley, however, who truly put Sun, and Phillips, on the map at a national level. Presley, a Memphis native (by way of Tupelo, Mississippi, where he spent his early childhood), began his relationship with Sun Records in August, 1953, when he was just 18 years old. He came into the studio, ostensibly, to record a gift for his mother, but Phillips immediately recognized Presley's remarkable talent and charisma. Still, from this initial meeting, Presley did not realize instant success. Rather, he went to work as a truck driver for the local electric company. It was not until a now-legendary recording session on July 5, 1954 that Presley and Phillips' collaboration really came to fruition. This session produced such signature early tracks as “That's All Right” (a cover of a song by the blues singer Arthur “Big Boy” Crudup) and “Blue Moon of Kentucky” (originally by the bluegrass artist Bill Monroe). The infectious style with which Presley performed these songs made him into a rapidly emerging sensation.

After a year of touring in the Southern US, and on the strength of his Sun singles, Presley caught the attention of RCA Records, with whom he signed a lucrative recording contract, leaving the small-time Phillips and Sun. From there, Presley ascended to iconic status, as the so-called “King of Rock and Roll,” starring in numerous Hollywood films as the face (and, famously, the hips) of rock music and of the younger, post-WWII generation in general. Nevertheless, the initial collection of material, now known as Presley's Sun Sessions, is still considered by many rock critics and historians to be among the finest work of Presley's career; to be sure, these tracks, recorded by Phillips, represent a seminal moment in rock and roll history.

Though Presley was the biggest star to emerge from Sun, he was certainly not the only major figure to pass through Phillips's studio. As we see in *Million Dollar Quartet*, Johnny Cash first auditioned for Phillips as a gospel singer, but Phillips encouraged him to stick to secular tunes. He did—for the time being anyway—and with Phillips at the helm, Cash recorded such early hits as “Hey Porter” and “Cry! Cry! Cry!”, followed soon after by the classic songs “Folsom Prison Blues” and “I Walk the Line.” Although Cash, like Presley, would depart from Sun for a major label (Columbia Records), Phillips played a vital role in shaping the young Cash's image and style of music, as well as recording what remain to be some of his most well-known songs.

Carl Perkins may, today, be the least widely famous of the play's all-star quartet, but he was another key discovery for Phillips. Perkins was inspired to pay a visit to Memphis and Sun Records after hearing Presley's version of “Blue Moon of Kentucky” played on the radio. After joining up with Phillips, Perkins, in turn, recorded what would later become one of Presley's signature hits: “Blue Suede Shoes,” later included on the self-titled *Elvis Presley*, Presley's RCA debut. Before this, Perkins himself enjoyed notable success with the track, and its climb to the top of the rhythm-and-blues charts was a testament to Phillips' vision of blurred racial lines. In Perkins, as in Presley, Phillips saw a prime opportunity to introduce white audiences to the sound and style of African-American music. Though Perkins, Presley, and Cash were nominally country-and-western artists, Phillips recognized many affinities between their songs and those of black-identified musical idioms—especially in the working-class, Southern bent of both styles. It was from this unconventional insight that the new form of rock and roll took shape—and took off, storming the record charts and dance-halls of America.

Perhaps no one embodied the anarchic, youthful spirit of this new, hybrid musical style as fully as did Jerry Lee Lewis. The Louisiana firebrand, with his wildly energetic piano-playing and raucous vocal delivery recorded his first hits, “Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On” and “Great Balls of Fire,” with Phillips at Sun. Like Presley and Cash, Lewis was poised for national stardom, but his career was temporarily derailed by the unseemly revelation that he had married his thirteen year-old cousin, Myra Gale Brown—a scandal suggested in passing in *Million Dollar Quartet*.

Around this time, Phillips also launched the career of the rockabilly group Teen Kings, a group fronted by Roy Orbison. Not only did Phillips sign and record the band, but until Orbison's later ascent to fame, the Teen Kings resided in Phillips' Memphis home. Yet—as with Phillips' arguments with Cash, regarding his gospel-music aspirations—Orbison disagreed with Phillips on the direction his burgeoning career should follow, and he soon left Sun for RCA Nashville,

where he became closely identified with the developing “Nashville Sound.” Although Sun's peak period was the 1950s, during which time Phillips oversaw this incredible, rotating roster of talent, he continued to run the label and studio through the 1960s, until he sold Sun in 1969. Incidentally, though, Phillips made much of his fortune not in music, but in the hotel business, having been an early principal investor in the Holiday Inn motel chain. As the successful chain expanded to national ubiquity, Phillips created Holiday Inn Records, a small subsidiary of Sun. Later in his career, Phillips also purchased several radio stations in his native Alabama.

In 1986, Phillips became one of the newly established Rock and Roll Hall of Fame's first inductees, lauded for his tremendous contributions to rock music's early evolution. Before his death in 2003, Phillips was also inducted into the respective Halls of Fame for Blues and Country Music, honours that speak to Phillips' brilliant ability to see beyond genre, and racial, lines, and consequently to recognize the great potential for cross-pollination in American musical styles.

## THE ORIGINS OF ROCK AND ROLL

The definitive early sound of rock and roll was perfected in the 1950s, by Sam Phillips and the artists who emerged from his Sun Studio and Records, as well as by contemporary black artists like Chuck Berry and Little Richard. Before this point, however, rock and roll's origins are somewhat foggier, and remain, to a certain extent, a matter of contention and continued inquiry by historians of music and American culture. This short essay will look at some of the possible “origins” of rock and roll—and the origins of rock's most immediate generic antecedents—prior to its emergence as a recognizable musical genre in the 1950s.

Most scholars agree that the most important forerunners to rock and roll were the African-American musical forms of the early twentieth century. Foremost among these were blues, jazz, ragtime, and gospel music. By the 1930s, these genres entered into the broader popular culture, through the success of performers such as Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington. At a social level, the increasing integration in US cities like New York and Chicago led to white audiences being exposed to the musical styles of the black community.

Meanwhile, in the South, and in particular in Nashville, Tennessee, country and western artists gradually incorporated aspects of blues music into their songs; important early artists, like Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family, blended regional “hillbilly” styles with the blues in ways that would later formatively influence Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Ray Charles, and many other major stars

of later decades. To be sure, all of these different, yet overlapping, musical idioms were formed from the culture of poor, working-class America, and proved appealing to common audiences, from the large cities of the industrial North and Northeast to the rural Deep South, Appalachia, and the growing Southwest.

Yet, the still-deeper roots for this music, most historians observe, lie in the music of black slaves and, later, freed peasant farmers in the South. These labourers would sing to pass the time as they worked long, hard days in the fields; their precious few hours of leisure time were also often filled with song and dance. In the period between the early- to mid-twentieth century, many former slaves or their descendants moved from the Southern states to the large urban centres north of the Mason-Dixon Line. What is now known as the Great Migration began around 1910, motivated in large part by the violent racism that remained prevalent in Southern society; by 1970, approximately six-million African-Americans had left the South. In search of superior work prospects at booming, Northern factories, large communities of migrants relocated to places like New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Chicago, Indianapolis, St. Louis, and Cleveland, and they brought with them the intergenerational music of Southern slave culture. The mass movement of peoples and re-shuffling of racial demographics in America's cities and regions, particularly during the first half of the twentieth century, was critical for the future inception of rock and roll.

However, just as the twentieth-century descendants of slaves retained memories of the music passed down from their ancestors, the music sung and performed by those slaves in the pre-Civil War South had itself derived from the remembered musical traditions of Africa.

Distinctive elements of black slave music—which would later shape the blues, ragtime, gospel music, and, finally, rock and roll—have been cited by musicologists as having originated in the indigenous musical traditions of Africa. Among those identifiably African-derived elements are call-and-response “hollers”; vocal rhythmization and guttural effects; vocal and percussive improvisation; “blue” notes (notes sung or played a non-standard pitch for expressive purpose); and polyrhythmic effects. Indeed, such distinctive musical elements can still be easily recognized today in the indigenous music of modern Africa, so-called “Afropop.” That these same elements took on different, and sometimes surprising, new lives as they became fixtures of various genres of American popular music speaks to the way that rock and roll's history is thoroughly bound up with the long, problematic history of race and class in the United States, from the horrors of the Middle Passage to the slave plantations of the pre-Civil War South to the Great Migrations of the twentieth century and the progressive development of the blues, jazz, ragtime, gospel, and country-and-western musical styles.

It is little wonder that Sam Phillips, who grew up poor in Alabama, recognized something powerful and potentially universal in the songs sung by the black labourers whom he encountered as a youth. Phillips applied this recognition to the creation of a “new” form of music, blending and re-purposing bits and pieces of multiple musical genres, both “black” and “white.” But for all that was apparently new and innovative in the rock music of the 1950s, there was also a great deal that was very old, perhaps even dating back to the African homeland of America's slaves and their emancipated descendants, who preserved in ever-evolving music the memory of cultures and communities from their deep, collective past.



THE CAST. PHOTO BY DAVID COOPER

## SPOTLIGHT ON: *HAND TO GOD*

Robert Askins' recent Broadway hit *Hand to God* is devilishly funny and wildly original. In 2015, it was nominated for five Tony Awards, including Best New Play. *Hand to God* tells the story of a Lutheran puppet-making club in suburban Texas, and the chaos that ensues when a teenaged boy's puppet develops a rebellious, demonic personality. More than just entertainment, the play is a provocative and imaginative exploration of the secrets and struggles within a religious community.

*Hand to God* runs at the Arts Club's Goldcorp Stage from May 25 to June 25. It will be directed by Stephen Drover (*The Patron Saint of Stanley Park*) and will feature returning Arts Club actors Julie Leung (*The Day Before Christmas*), Jennifer Lines (*It's a Wonderful Life*), and Shekhar Paleja (*The Men in White*).



MAY 25 – JUNE 25  
GOLDCORP STAGE AT THE BMO THEATRE CENTRE

The play focuses on Jason, a teenaged boy whose mother, Margery, runs a puppet-making club in a church basement. Jason and Margery are struggling to move forward after the recent loss of Jason's father. Jason also struggles with his confusing feelings for Jessica, a smart girl who speaks her mind. Meanwhile, Margery is having a hard time with Timothy, a young troublemaker with a hidden agenda. As everyone prepares for a puppet performance, things take a hilarious and twisted turn. Jason's puppet, Tyrone, develops a life of his own, voicing shocking secrets and defying the community's values. Is Jason possessed by the devil? Or is something much more complicated going on?

*Hand to God* is an incredibly unique and surprising black comedy. It exposes the contradictions that exist within its characters—and all of us—challenging black-and-white notions of good and evil. It's also a hysterical commentary on the moral dilemmas facing many young people in our bewildering world.

*Hand to God* will delight anyone with a wicked sense of humour and a love of adventurous theatre.

## NOTES



BEFORE EVERY PRODUCTION AT THE STANLEY INDUSTRIAL ALLIANCE STAGE, GAIN INSIGHT INTO THE SHOW BY READING *BILL'S NOTES*. ARTISTIC MANAGING DIRECTOR BILL MILLERD SHARES HIS THOUGHTS ABOUT THE WORK YOU ARE ABOUT TO EXPERIENCE. ENJOY—AND SHARE *BILL'S NOTES* WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY!

# million dollar quartet

MAY 11 – JULY 9



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