

at theREP★

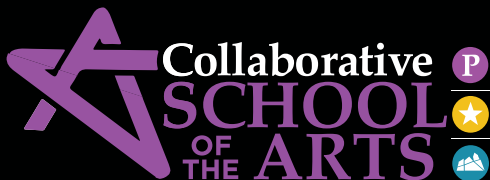
2023-2024 SEASON



MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET CHRISTMAS

STUDY
GUIDE

BOOK BY COLIN ESCOTT



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(518)382-3884 x 139 | groupsales@proctors.org

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2023-2024 | CAPITAL REPERTORY THEATRE STUDENT MATINEES

“What the Constitution Means to Me”

by Heidi Schreck

Student Matinee | Oct. 4, 2023

“Million Dollar Quartet Christmas”

Book by Colin Escott

Student Matinee | Dec. 13 and 20, 2023

“Sweat” by Lynn Nottage

Student Matinee | Mar. 27, 2024

WORLD PREMIERE

“Three Mothers” by Ajene D. Washington

Student Matinee | May 2 and 9, 2024

ON-THE-GO! IN-SCHOOL TOURS

“Shakespeare: The Remix”

by Aaron Jafferis & Gihieh Lee

Oct. 23-Nov. 18, 2023

“Henry Johnson: Ballad of a Forgotten Hero” by Rachel Lynett

Dramaturgy by Eunice Ferreria

Feb. 5-March 8, 2024

OTHER

NEW PLAY SUMMIT 13 | Spring 2024

**SUMMER STAGE YOUNG ACTING
COMPANY PERFORMANCES** |

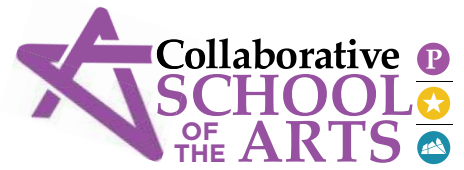
Summer 2024

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FALL 2023

theREP ★



Dear Educator:

Welcome to Capital Repertory Theatre at 251 North Pearl St.!

We are thrilled that you are attending a student matinee performance of “Shakespeare: The Remix,” one of theREP’s MainStage productions for the 2023-24 season, and hope that you will find this guide to be a useful tool in your classroom.

You have permission to reproduce materials within this guide for use in your classroom. It is designed to introduce the cultural and historical context of the play, as well as provide resources and ideas for incorporating the theatre experience into your curriculum. Productions by theREP are likely to generate questions, thoughts and opinions amongst your students.

The arts provide young imaginations with stimulation, points of reference and intellectual resources for the mind and spirit; it is theREP’s goal to make live theatre attendance possible for all students in the Capital Region. Tens of thousands of Capital Region students have attended student matinees and On-The-Go! performances throughout our history. We hope to continue to grow and serve the needs of the Capital Region education community for decades to come.

Your success stories help us to keep the program funded, so please let us know how you are using theatre in the classroom. We love to receive copies of lesson plans, student work related to our productions and your letters. These are important testimonials to the value of the arts in education.

We look forward to hearing from you!

With deepest gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret E. Hall".

Margaret E. Hall
Associate Artistic Director
mhall@capitalrep.org
(518) 462-4531 x410

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shai Davenport".

Shai Davenport
Education Programs Manager
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ABOUT US



Capital Repertory Theatre (theREP) is a non-profit professional-producing theatre. In its decades-long history, theREP has produced more than 8,000 performances for the people of the Capital Region.

A member of LORT (League of Resident Theatres), theREP strives to bring quality work that explores the essence of the human condition through the stories of people, events and phenomena that shape our contemporary lives. Theatre, at its best, entertains, cajoles and inspires by engaging the heart and mind through its most powerful ally—the imagination.

There are two basic types of theatre companies: producing and presenting. theREP is a producing theatre. The theatre hires a director and designers for the set, costumes, lights and sound. The theatre’s artistic director and the director select appropriate actors for all the roles in the play. Then they all come to Albany, where the play is built and rehearsed. The resident staff of the theatre works with visiting artists to put the production together.

In addition to the main theatre space, theREP has a studio theatre that acts as a rehearsal hall and secondary venue for performances (such as several of Black Theatre Troupe of Upstate NY’s recent productions), a costume shop where costumes are constructed and cared for, a prop shop where props are made, offices where the administrative staff works and housing facilities for out-of-town actors. theREP’s sets are constructed in a scene shop that is also a part of the Proctors Collaborative and located in Rotterdam, NY.

In contrast to a producing theatre, presenting theatres (sometimes called “roadhouses”)—like Proctors in Schenectady (also a part of the Proctors Collaborative)—host shows that have been designed, built and rehearsed elsewhere. Touring productions are booked into presenting theatres. Shows that are booked into presenting houses will tour regionally, nationally or even internationally over an extended period. What you will see at theREP or with our On-The-Go! tours are unique to theREP where it was built. No one from anywhere else will see this production just as you see it!

Capital Repertory Theatre is a part of Proctors Collaborative, which also includes Proctors, Universal Preservation Hall, the Collaborative School of the Arts and the Collaborative Scene Shop.



STUDENT MATINEES | Performance at theREP @10:30am

PRICE | \$12 per student

CHAPERONES | For every 15 students, one complimentary adult ticket is provided

LOCATION | 251 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12207

RESERVATIONS | Contact Group Sales at 518.382.3884 x 139 | groupsales@proctors.org

SCHOLARSHIPS | Visit www.capitalrep.org for more information and applications

ON-THE-GO! | For more information and to book a tour contact onthego@proctors.org | school.proctors.org

Capital Repertory Theatre is one of the organizations within the Proctors Collaborative, which also includes: Proctors, Universal Preservation Hall (UPH), the Collaborative School of the Arts and the Collaborative Scene Shop.

A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE SCRIPT

They're back! In this "not a sequel but not the exact original 'Million Dollar Quartet'" script, iconic musicians Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Elvis Presley are back together to celebrate the holidays in another awesome jam session! The quartet is back at Sun Records, now festively decorated for the holidays, where they get up to their usual antics as the audience journeys through stories of Christmas' past, present and future. The toe-tapping production is jam-packed with holiday hits - as well as the hits that made these four icons who they are.

Set on December 4, 1956, when an extraordinary twist of fate brings Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Elvis Presley together at Sun Records in Memphis, Tennessee, for what would be one of the greatest jam sessions ever. "Million Dollar Quartet Christmas" brings that legendary night to life with an irresistible tale of broken promises, secrets, betrayal and celebrations that are both poignant and funny.

ABOUT THE CREATOR(S) BOOK BY COLIN ESCOTT

Born in England, Colin Escott lives near Nashville, Tennessee. He is the author of "Good Rockin' Tonight: Sun Records and the Birth of Rock 'N' Roll," the first in-depth account of the Sun Records story. His book "Hank Williams-The Biography" has been adapted into the movie "I Saw the Light," starring Tom Hiddleston and Elizabeth Olsen. His multi-CD box set, "The Complete Hank Williams," won a Grammy and another of his productions, "B.B. King-King of the Blues," was nominated for a Grammy.



- **About "Million Dollar Quartet" - Original Concept, Director, & Co-Author - Floyd Mutrux** | Floyd Mutrux apprenticed at the Alley Theatre in Houston and worked at Second City in Chicago; he attended Columbia University. He has conceived, written, directed and or produced 50 films, including "Dusty and Sweets McGee;" "Freebie and the Bean;" "Aloha, Bobby and Rose, The Hollywood Knights;" "American Hot Wax;" "Dick Tracy;" "American Me; Blood In, Blood Out;" "There Goes My Baby;" and "Mulholland Falls." With his wife, Birgitte, he is preparing a new film, "Moon Over Memphis" (a rock 'n' roll field of dreams). He also co-wrote the musical "Baby It's You!" with Colin Escott and helped adapt "Sun Records," the new TV series based on "Million Dollar Quartet." "Million Dollar Quartet" received three Tony Award nominations in 2010, including best book and best musical.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

ABOUT THAT NIGHT IN 1956

On December 4, 1956, a magical twist of fate brought the legendary Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis and Elvis Presley together at Memphis, Tennessee's famous Sun Records storefront studio.

Both "Million Dollar Quartet" and "Million Dollar Quartet Christmas" aim to capture the contagious spirit, freewheeling excitement, and thrilling sounds of that once-in-a-lifetime event when and where four of music's best talents came together.

The story goes that it was the winter of 1956, Christmas time, when Carl Perkins, in a post-"Blue Suede Shoes" funk, booked a recording session with producer Sam Phillips. Perkins was there with his band and Jerry Lee Lewis. Precise details from the session are still up for debate, but history has proven that Perkins and Lewis were later joined by Elvis Presley and Johnny Cash, and the foursome held an impromptu jam session. After, a newspaper wrote, "This quartet could sell a million" the name stuck, for shortly thereafter, they were known as "The Million Dollar Quartet."

The session was a kind of reunion for Cash, Perkins and Presley, who had toured the South together in 1955. Lewis was still a star on the rise but quickly bonded with Presley over their shared knowledge of spirituals. Cash's presence is still debated by historians; some say that he was only there for a short time—which seemed to be confirmed on session recordings, in which you can't hear the Man in Black at all. However, in Cash's autobiography, the country music legend attributes his relative absence on the recordings to the fact that he was singing in a higher register than usual to help blend better with Presley. And who's going to fight with a man writing his own biography?

The recording session retains its historical significance as a landmark event in the age of rock 'n' roll and a milestone for the genre in the ever-changing world of 20th-century popular culture and mass media. In the decades that ensued, the 1956 'Million Dollar Quartet' has often been referred to as the 'Mount Rushmore of Rock 'n' Roll.'



ABOUT SUN RECORDS

Sam Phillips, also known as the "Father of Rock 'n' Roll" – for the talent he found and signed–opened Sun Records on February 1, 1952. The recording label would become one of the most well-known American independent record labels of the 1950s (and beyond).

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

ABOUT SUN RECORDS

Picture it. It's 1952. There's something in the air. It's like the musical stage was set and waiting for something big to happen. Enter Sam Phillips. Phillips opened Sun Records in a tiny, rented storefront on Union Avenue in Memphis, TN, with the slogan **"We Record Anything-Anywhere-Anytime."** For a few dollars, anyone could walk in and make an acetate dub (acetate dub-also known as acetate disc, lacquer, test acetate, dubplate or transcription disc, is a type of phonograph record that was used from the 1930s to the late 1950s, for recording and broadcast purposes) of their choice. Folks that came in usually recorded a song or a special message for a loved one. The following year, a fresh-faced teenager just out of high school came in to record a ballad for his mother. And the rest, they say, is history. Who was that teenager? None other than Elvis Presley!

And Sun Sound was born. Phillips was a patient businessman, willing to listen to almost anyone who came in off the street to record. And Memphis was a happy home to a diverse musical scene, including gospel, blues, hillbilly, country, boogie and western swing. Taking advantage of this range of talent, Sun Sound was born! Phillips didn't have style limitations at the label. In one form or another Sun recorded them all.

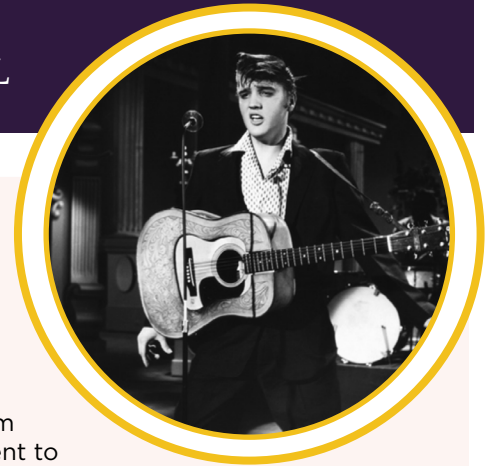


INTERESTING SUN RECORDS FACTS

- ✓ **Named Sun Records as a sign of his perpetual optimism, a new day and a new beginning.**
- ✓ **Sun provided a non-critical, spontaneous environment that invited creativity and unique/new visions.**
- ✓ **Phillips launched his studio amid a growing number of independent labels.**
- ✓ **In a short amount of time, Sun gained a reputation throughout Memphis as a label that treated local artists with respect and honesty.**
- ✓ **Phillips "discovered" Elvis Presley, who helped Sun Sound by infusing country music with R&B.**
- ✓ **Elvis attracted more and more ground-breaking talent into the Sun galaxy.**
 - Chief among them, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and Carl Perkins.
 - As well as: Roy Orbison, Charlie Rich, Bill Justis, Harold Jenkins (a.k.a. Conway Twitty) and more.
- ✓ **Inherent in the music of Sun is a vibrancy that survives to this day - Sincere, passionate music. It reflects the diversity and vision of the talent recorded on the Sun label, and indeed, American pop culture itself.**

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

ABOUT ELVIS PRESLEY: THE KING OF ROCK 'N' ROLL



BIOGRAPHY

Born: Elvis Aaron Presley on January 8, 1935

Moved: To Memphis in 1948 with his parents

Graduated: From Humes HS in 1953

Aged: 21 in 1956 - the Million Dollar Quartet night

Drafted: 1958 - Presley was drafted and went to war

Dominated the Charts: from 1956 through 1958 he dominated the best-seller charts and ushered in the age of rock 'n' roll

Married: He married in 1968 and became the father of Lisa Marie in 1968

Divorced: In 1973

Died: August 16, 1977, at the age of 42-in 1977- which was brought on, largely, by drug abuse. Mourners from around the world went to Graceland to "bid him farewell."

Primary Instrument: guitar and vocals

Best-known songs: "Hound Dog," "Jailhouse Rock," "That's All Right," "Long Tall Sally," "Heartbreak Hotel," "Teddy Bear," "Don't be Cruel," "Blue Suede Shoes," "Love Me Tender" and "All Shook Up"

Hip-shaking Elvis Presley is one of rock music's dominant performers from the mid-1950s until his untimely death in 1977.

Elvis' musical influences were the pop and country music of the time, the gospel music he heard in church and at the all-night gospel sings he frequently attended, and the black R&B he absorbed on historic Beale Street as a Memphis teenager.



In 1954, Elvis began his singing career with the legendary Sun Records label in Memphis. In late 1955, his recording contract was sold to RCA Victor. By 1956, he was an international sensation. With a sound and style that uniquely combined his diverse musical influences and blurred and challenged the social and racial barriers of the time, he ushered in a whole new era of American music and popular culture. He became the teen idol of his decade and was greeted everywhere by screaming hordes of young women.

He starred in 33 successful films, made history with his television appearances and specials and knew great acclaim through his many, often record-breaking, live concert performances on tour and in Las Vegas. Globally, he has sold over one billion records, more than any other artist. His American sales have earned him gold, platinum or multi-platinum awards. Among his many achievements were 14 Grammy nominations (three wins) from the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences, the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award which he received at age 36 and his being named one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men of the Nation for 1970 by the United States Jaycees. Without any of the special privileges, his celebrity status might have afforded him, Elvis honorably served his country in the U.S. Army.

His talent, good looks, sensuality, charisma and good humor endeared him to millions, as did the humility and human kindness he demonstrated throughout his life. Known the world over by his first name, he is regarded as one of the most important figures of twentieth-century popular culture. Elvis passed away at his Memphis home, Graceland, on August 16, 1977.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

ABOUT JOHNNY CASH : THE MAN IN BLACK

BIOGRAPHY

Born: John R. Cash on February 26, 1932

Hometown: Kingsland, Arkansas

Aged: 24 in 1956 – the Million Dollar Quartet night

Military Service: Airforce (learned to play the guitar while stationed in Germany in the 1950s)

Signed with Sun Records: 1955

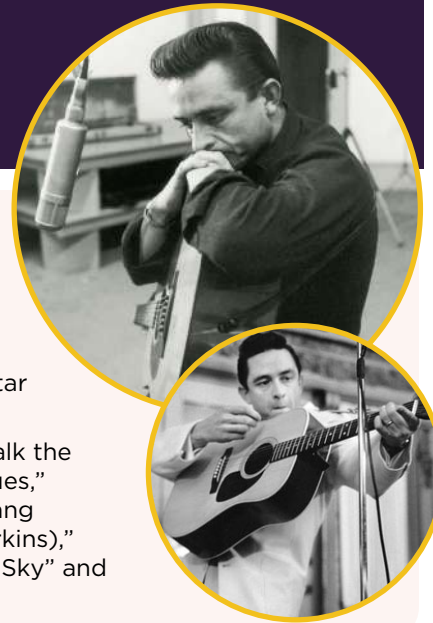
Married: in 1968 to June Carter

TV: in 1969-71 “The Johnny Cash Show” was on the air

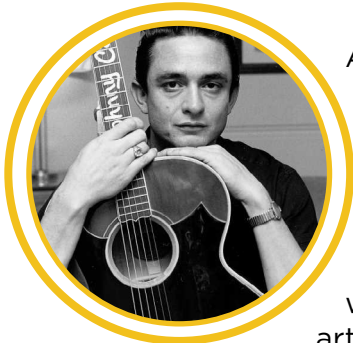
Died: September 12, 2003, in Nashville, Tennessee

Primary Instrument: Guitar and vocals

Best-known songs: “I Walk the Line,” “Folsom Prison Blues,” “Ring of Fire,” “Daddy Sang Bass (written by Carl Perkins),” “Jackson,” “Riders in the Sky” and “Big River”



American singer and songwriter whose work broadened the scope of country and western music, Johnny Cash, is one of the most influential, and respected artists in the history of recorded music. From his monumental live prison albums to his extraordinary series of commentaries on the American spirit and the human condition, a mesmerizing canon of gospel recordings, his remarkable and unprecedented late-life artistic triumphs of will and wisdom, and his impact on our culture is profound.



After a stint in the US Air Force, where he distinguished himself as a radio intercept operator, and some less-successful efforts as an automobile factory worker and door-to-door home goods salesman, Cash broke onto the music scene in 1955 with Memphis’s fabled Sun Records—and by 1957, he was the top recording country and western artist.

Cash’s music was noted for its stripped-down sound and focus on the working poor as well as social and political issues. As he matured as an artist, he would take his followers on soaring adventures of the mind and soul, including “Ride This Train,” a travelogue of the sights and sounds of his beloved country; “Blood, Sweat and Tears,” the Cash canon of working man blues; “Bitter Tears,” a searing examination of the treatment of the Native Americans; “The Holy Land, Hymns from the Heart” and other deeply personal statements of faith and devotion; and of course, his historic concerts at Folsom Prison and San Quentin.

Cash and his talents neither burned out nor faded away. In his later years, new audiences flocked to hear his consideration of what it means to be human. His powerful statements on love, forgiveness and life and death spoke across time and generations, and still do today. At the end of his life, Cash had become not only the champion and conscience of the American experience, but a portal through which mortals glimpse immortality, an exemplar of overcoming adversity through honesty, and a role model in the everlasting pursuit of redemption and the promise of the unclouded day.

Johnny Cash was a recipient of numerous awards, including 13 Grammy wins, a lifetime achievement award in 1999 and nine Country Music Association awards. He was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1980 and into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1992. In 1996, he received a Kennedy Center honor.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

ABOUT JERRY LEE LEWIS: THE KILLER

BIOGRAPHY

Born: September 29, 1935

Hometown: Ferriday, Louisiana

Aged: 21 in 1956 - the Million Dollar Quartet night

Signed with Sun Records: 1956

Died: October 28, 2022

Rock & Roll Hall of Famer: First person inducted into the first class of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1986

Primary Instrument: Piano and vocals

Best-known songs: "Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On," "Great Balls of Fire," "Real Wild Child," "Breathless"



Jerry Lee Lewis is one of the first true rock 'n' roll musicians. He catapulted to fame with his 1957 hit, "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," and proved to the world that a piano man could play front and center on the world's biggest stages. He stirred up some trouble in his day, once lighting a piano on fire on stage with a Coca-Cola bottle of gas to close out the show. Other rock legends have said that they never wanted to follow a performance of his.

He began playing the piano at age 9 (having taught himself), copying the styles of preachers and Black musicians that traveled through the area he lived. He played piano and sang in church growing up. His father mortgaged the family farm to buy him his first piano when he was 10, and he gave his first public performance at the age of 14.

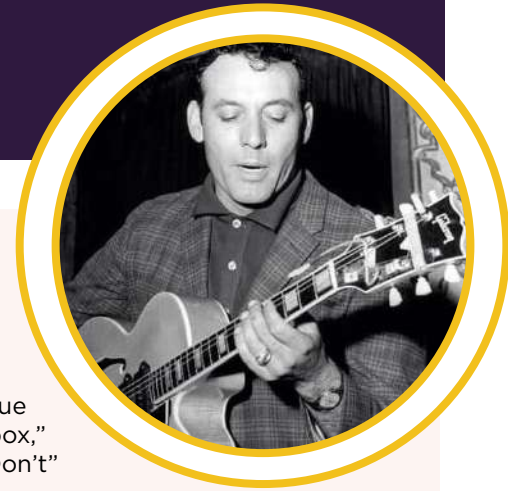
Some of his early influences: radio shows from the Grand Ole Opry and Louisiana Hayride; artists such as Jimmie Rodgers, Hank Williams and Al Jolson. By 1957, Lewis had developed a performance style with some famous stage antics like playing standing up. He had such energy and enthusiasm in his performances that he earned the nickname "The Killer" for the way he knocked out his audiences.

During his career, Lewis won four Grammys (including a Grammy Lifetime Achievement award). In the 1960s, he returned to the music of his youth, and then, in 1968, he found a new career as a country artist, scoring a hit with "Another Place, Another Time," and went on to record several country albums of the next few years ie: 1970s "Olde Tyme Country Music" and 1975s "Boogie Woogie Country Man." In April of 2013, Lewis opened Jerry Lee Lewis' Café & Honky Tonk on historic Beale Street in Memphis, Tennessee.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

ABOUT CARL PERKINS: THE KING OF ROCKABILLY



BIOGRAPHY

Born: Carl Lee Perkins on April 9, 1932, in Tiptonville, TN

Hometown: Tiptonville, Tennessee

Aged: 24 in 1956 - the Million Dollar Quartet night

Married: January 24, 1953, he married Valda Crider

Grammy: Grammy Hall of Fame award in 1986 for "Blue Suede Shoes"

Rock & Roll Hall of Fame: inducted in 1987

Died: January 19, 1998

Primary Instrument: Guitar and vocals

Best-known songs: "Blue Suede Shoes," "Matchbox," "Dixie Fried," "Honey Don't"

The widely influential pioneer of rockabilly. Carl Perkins transformed his humble sharecropper roots into jumping, jiving rockabilly hits.

Perkins is one of the architects of rock 'n' roll, virtually defined and established rockabilly music, and is best known as the writer-and original singer-of the song "Blue Suede Shoes" (recorded in December 1955 and released on January 1, 1956 on the Sun label). According to Perkins, in 1955, after a show in Parkin, AK-while touring with Elvis and Cash-Perkins wrote down some of the words said by a dancer to his date about "not wanting her to step on his new blue suede shoes."

He learned to play guitar as a kid while listening to country music, gospel and blues. He began to write some of his own compositions and performed a song that he'd written ("Movie Magg") at a local talent show when he was just 13 years old and won. Perkins would go on to form a group with his brothers Jay and Clayton, aptly named the Perkins Brothers. Carl played electric guitar and did most of the singing; while Jay played acoustic guitar and Clayton, the upright bass. The Perkins Brothers performed at their local honky tonk called the El Rancho Club, in 1947-48, having added a new band member, and drummer, named W.B. Holland. They would also play on their local station, WDXT radio, from 1950-52.

He signed with Flip Records (a subsidiary of Sun in Memphis) on January 25, 1955. Recorded "Blue Suede Shoes" and 1956 and saw his star rising. While traveling for several TV appearances (such as the Ed Sullivan and Perry Como TV shows), Perkins was involved in a terrible car accident leaving him with a fractured skull and a broken arm. While his physical recovery happened 'fast enough,' it was hard for Perkins to regain the career momentum he'd had going prior to his accident.

He signed with the Dollie label in 1963 and joined his friend Johnny Cash's road show in January 1965. He stayed with Cash for 10 years, exhibiting his fine guitar playing, performing solo at times and occasionally writing songs. Cash may sing, "Daddy Sang Bass" but it's Perkins' composition. Perkins continued recording country songs into the 70s, and in the mid-70s he even appeared at the Wembley Festival in England with his new album, "Old Blue Suede Shoes Is Back Again." He would continue to record songs for various labels, including his own, which he appropriately named Suede. Over the years, Perkins collaborated with many other notable artists, including his work on the album "The Million Dollar Quartet" with Cash, Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis and on "The Trio Plus" with Lewis, Charley Pride and others.

Latter-day pop artists who would acknowledge the influence of Carl Perkins include Rick Nelson, John Fogerty, Bob Dylan, Eric Clapton and Paul McCartney, who said "If there were no Carl Perkins, there would be no Beatles."



MUSIC GENRES

SPIRITUALS

A spiritual is a type of religious folksong that is most closely associated with the enslavement of African people in the American South. The songs proliferated in the last few decades of the eighteenth century leading up to the abolishment of legalized slavery in the 1860s. The African American spiritual constitutes one of the largest and most significant forms of American folksong. The form has its roots in the informal gatherings of enslaved Africans in the eighteenth century. Spirituals, often used as codified protest songs, are typically sung in a call-and-response form.

In Frederick Douglass' book, "My Bondage and My Freedom" (1855), he wrote this, of singing spirituals during his years in bondage: "A keen observer might have detected in our repeated singing of 'O Canaan, sweet Canaan, I am bound for the land of Canaan,' something more than a hope of reaching heaven. We meant to reach the North, and the North was our Canaan."

- Frederick Douglass was a nineteenth-century abolitionist and former enslaved man.



ROCKABILLY

Rockabilly is one of the earliest forms of rock 'n' roll. It flourished in the mid-1950s based mainly in the American South, and several of its leading practitioners were among the most famous early rock 'n' roll performers.

This early form of rock music originated from white performers in the American South, and after its popular run in the mid-1950s to 1960, it had a revival in the late 1970s. Record reviewers coined the term rockabilly - literally, rock 'n' roll played by hillbillies - to describe the intense, rhythm-driven musical style introduced by Elvis on his first recordings. The classic rockabilly sound was "a brash, lively, unselfconscious hybrid of blues and country," characterized by a "slapping string bass, twanging lead guitar [and] acoustic rhythm guitar - with plenty of echo."

COUNTRY AND WESTERN

A genre of music originating in the Southern and Southwestern United States. First produced in the 1920s, country music primarily focuses on working-class American and blue-collar American life.

The term country and western music (or country music as it was later coined) was adopted by the recording industry in 1949 to replace the derogatory label of "hillbilly music."

MUSIC GENRES



GOSPEL

The history of gospel music in the US dates back over one hundred years. The term ‘gospel’ was coined by Thomas Dorsey (known as the father of gospel) in 1921 during the National Baptist Convention. Dorsey was a songwriter of many songs, including ‘Precious Lord.’ Gospel was born from the traditional hymns and spiritual songs that Africans sang when they were enslaved. The traditional hymns were introduced in the United States by Europeans who had settled in North America. Hymns and sacred songs were often repeated in a call-and-response fashion, heavily influenced by ancestral African music. Characterized by dominant vocals and strong use of harmony with Christian lyrics; gospel music outside the U.S. can be traced to the early 17th century (Scotland).

RHYTHM AND BLUES

Historically speaking, rhythm and blues, as we understand it today, most often describes a style of music that developed after WWII, is a genre of music that combines elements of pop, gospel, blues and jazz, with a strong backbeat.

Rhythm and blues (R&B) is a genre of popular music that originated in African American communities in the 1940s. The term first appeared in commercial recording in 1948, when RCA Victor Records used “blues and rhythm” music as a descriptor for African American secular songs.

A few examples (from the 50s-60s) of ... Spirituals

- “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” by Etta James <https://youtu.be/HYbRwSjAir4>
- “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” by Johnny Cash https://youtu.be/z9Y_GLT4_9I
- “Deep Down in My Heart” by James Cleveland <https://youtu.be/XzSJI0vS46A>



Examples of ... Rockabilly

- “Blue Suede Shoes” by Carl Perkins <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRNyvO4QouY>
- “Ooby Dooby” by Roy Orbison <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYmxPNenzqM>
- “That’s All Right” by Elvis Presley https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZe_8u-rGWE

Examples of ... Country and Western

- “I Walk the Line” by Johnny Cash <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-6fW66IUy4>
- “Cold, Cold Heart” by Hank Williams <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQmzp-NA5PM>
- “Heartbreak Hotel” by Elvis Presley <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGwO2BaDJQc>
- “Folsom Prison Blues” by Johnny Cash https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_NLlOiD1Wo

Examples of ... Gospel

- “Angel of Death” by Hank Williams <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z4D0Q0bDrJg>
- “Crying in the Chapel” by Elvis Presley <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkRLYcLseUg>
- “His Eye is On The Sparrow” by Mahalia Jackson <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkRLYcLseUg>

Examples of ... Rhythm and Blues

- Why Do Fools Fall in Love by Frankie Lymon <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IU9Q7hEhQjY>
- Wake Up Little Susie by the Everly Brothers <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1flmXAeS-s>
- Sh Boom by the Chords <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XSL-YtVV9U4>

IDEAS FOR CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

ENGLISH/LITERARY

WRITE! A REVIEW.

Ask students to write a review of the REP's production of "Million Dollar Quartet Christmas."

Things to consider when writing the review:

- What was the most compelling or intriguing aspect of the production?
- How did the set, costumes and props add (or take away) from the production?
- What did you think of the sound/music and stage movement?
- What did you think of the direction of the piece?
- What questions arose for you about the production? Was anything unclear or confusing?
- Can you make any connections between this play and other plays that you have seen? Can you make any connections from the play to your own life?

CHARACTER STUDY

Elvis Presley is known for his hip-shaking on-stage swagger and the bedazzled jumpsuit-wearing King of Rock 'N' Roll that he became. Students are asked to do a character study of his movement – watching YouTube clips, etc. and inhabit that character moving around the room.

SOCIAL STUDIES/HISTORY

1. **Research and Report:** Students are asked to do a research report on spirituals. Where they originated, how they were used in the 18th and 19th centuries by enslaved peoples and how they grew in popularity in the music industry in the 1950s.
2. **Research and Report:** How did Sam Phillips become the "Father of Rock 'N' Roll?"
3. **Research and Report:** The music in the production – and from the 1950s-60s in the United States is iconic.

RESOURCES CONSULTED

WEBSITES

- <https://www.theatricalrights.com/show/million-dollar-quartet-christmas/>
- <https://www.mdqchristmas.com/>
- <https://www.milliondollarquartet.net/>
- <https://www.loc.gov/collections/songs-of-america/articles-and-essays/musical-styles/ritual-and-worship/spirituals/>
- <https://sunrecords.com/history/>
- <https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2016/januaryfebruary/statement/the-birth-rock-%E2%80%98n%E2%80%99-roll-found-sam-phillips%E2%80%99s-sun-records>
- <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Elvis-Presley>
- <https://www.britannica.com/art/rockabilly>
- <https://www.graceland.com/biography>
- <https://www.johnnycash.com/about/biography/>
- <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Johnny-Cash>
- <https://jerryleewis.com/about/biography/>
- <https://www.history-of-rock.com/perkins.htm>
- <https://www.rockhall.com/inductees/carl-perkins>
- <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-gospel-music-definition-history-artists.html#:~:text=Gospel%20music%20was%20born%20from,had%20settled%20in%20North%20America>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Country_music
- <https://www.britannica.com/art/country-music>
- <https://www.loc.gov/collections/songs-of-america/articles-and-essays/musical-styles/popular-songs-of-the-day/rhythm-and-blues/>
- <https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Rockabilly>

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH are key components of theREP’s mission, “to create an authentic link to the community we serve.” Through a wide range of programs, theREP strives “to provide the Capital Region with theatre programming which inspires a greater understanding of the human condition” and helps “to develop future audiences by instilling the notion that theatre is a vital part of the cultural life of all vibrant cities.”

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS

Student Matinees (Classics on Stage): Performances of most of the theatre’s professional productions are scheduled during the school day with dramatically discounted prices for area students to allow for greater accessibility.

On-The-Go! In-School Tour: Specially adapted professional productions designed to play to students on-site in schools. theREP’s On-The-Go! program reaches close to 10,000+ students every year.

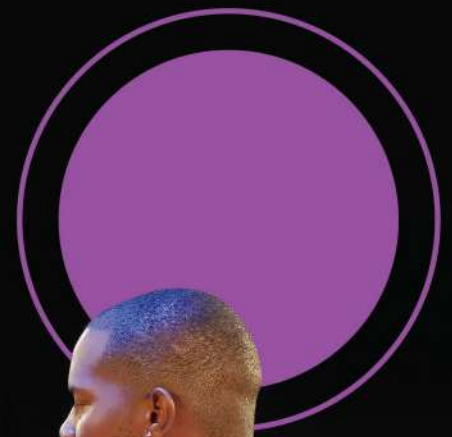
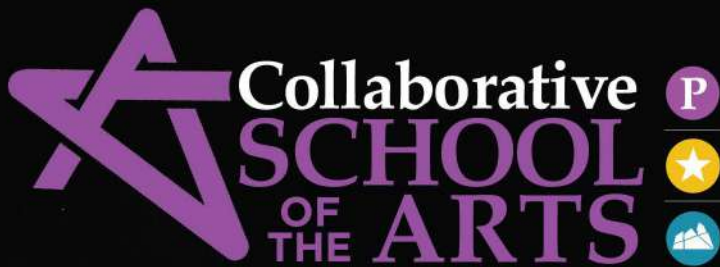
Young Playwright Contest: Providing students ages 13-19 with the opportunity to submit their work to be produced on theREP’s stage. In addition, the winning playwrights are given a mentorship—prior to the production of the play—with a theatre professional playwright (and/or director).

Summer Stage Young Acting Company: Providing young actors the opportunity to work together, with leading professionals in the field, on a production that will take place at theREP. Company members hone their acting skills while rehearsing and then performing the Young Playwright Contest-winning plays.

CAST (Cultivating Arts & Students Together): Providing students with the opportunity to volunteer at the theatre and earn community service credits at the same time. Teens get an in-depth learning experience that satisfies their passion to be a part of the arts while fulfilling their community service needs.

Artists-in-Residency Programs: theREP works in conjunction with school educators to bring highly trained teaching artists to work in extended residency within the classroom. Opportunities to embed the theatrical experience into the curriculum are available.

Career Development: theREP is dedicated to helping build the next generation of theatre professionals with programs like the Professional Apprenticeship Program which provides year-long or summer-long paid apprenticeships (as an assistant stage manager and or crew member) and Internship Program that provides college students internships in many disciplines of theatre. These programs are specifically for young people beginning a career in the performing arts.



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