

ST·LOUIS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

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ST. LOUIS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES TICKETS & DETAILS FOR FIRST HOLIDAY PRODUCTION

Q BROTHERS CHRISTMAS CAROL

NOVEMBER 21-DECEMBER 23 at the National Blues Museum

Created by Q Brothers Collective (JQ, GQ, JAX & POS)

Adapted from *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens

Directed by JQ & JAX

Music by JQ

Developed with Rick Boyton

St. Louis, MO (October 13, 2023) – The St. Louis Shakespeare Festival (Tom Ridgely, Producing Artistic Director) announces full cast, performance dates and ticket information for the much anticipated **Q BROTHERS CHRISTMAS CAROL** at the National Blues Museum this holiday season. **Q BROTHERS CHRISTMAS CAROL** will make its St. Louis debut November 21-December 23 in Downtown St. Louis. It marks the Festival’s third collaboration with Q Brothers Collective following *DRESS THE PART* at The Ready Room and a COVID-friendly walking tour adaptation, “A WALKING XMAS CAROL”, in the Central West End in 2020.

With over 20 years of credits, The Q Brothers and their hip-hop collective write and compose acclaimed “add-rap-tations” of classical texts. Previous productions *DRESS THE PART* (“The most fun you can have without taking your pants off” - Calvin Wilson, St. Louis Post-Dispatch and winner of four St. Louis Theater Circle Awards including Best Production of a Comedy and Best Ensemble), *OTHELLO: THE REMIX* and *I HEART JULIET* have been performed on stages at London’s The Globe Theater, Austin City Limits, The Sydney Festival, Chicago Shakespeare Theater and more.

Q Brothers Christmas Carol is a laugh-out-loud remix of the Charles Dickens classic *A Christmas Carol* – like you’ve never heard before. Ebenezer Scrooge is visited by three unexpected but recognizable music legends in the Ghosts of Hip-Hop Past, Present, and Future. As Scrooge sees the path of rhythm and redemption, does he throw off his selfish chains and get down to the beat? Audiences will fall for Lil’ Tim and the Cratchits thanks to tracks like “STILL GONNA CELEBRATE”, “GET YA SCROOGE ON”, “BIG POPPA” and more! The 80-minute performance mixes everything from reggae to rock, taking this beloved tale of

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love, forgiveness, and yuletide spirit up to 11. The performances will take place NOV 21 - DEC 23, Wednesday-Saturday evenings at 8 p.m. with a 3 p.m. matinee on Saturday.

“The Q Brothers are the true heirs to Shakespeare in almost every way,” said Tom Ridgely in a statement. “If you saw the Festival’s production of their *Dress the Part* in 2020, you know they are crafting language every bit as inventive and poetic as he was - and their plays are just as dazzling and entertaining. Their adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* is entirely faithful and utterly original - the funniest and most moving I’ve ever seen. We can’t wait to share it with St. Louis and know it’s well on its way to becoming a beloved holiday tradition.”

The fresh cast of Q BROTHERS CHRISTMAS CAROL includes Chicago-based **Edgar Miguel Sanchez** (SCROOGE), **Victor Musoni*** (JACOB MARLEY/LIL’ TIM/OTHERS), **Mo Shipley*** (OLIVER/FRED/OTHERS) and **Maya Vinice Prentiss** (BOB CRATCHIT/PAST/PRESENT/OTHERS). They are joined by St. Louis performer **Mel Bady** (DJ), previously seen in the Festival’s 2022 touring production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

The creative team will include founding Q Brothers Collective members JQ and Jackson Duron (JAX) as co-directors, choreography by NYC-based Steph Paul, scenic design by the acclaimed public artist William Attaway, costume and prop design by Erika McClellan, lighting design by Jesse Klug and sound design by Stephen Ptacek.

Unlike anything St. Louis audiences have seen before, Q BROTHERS CHRISTMAS CAROL will offer a whole evening of fun for families and groups. The National Blues Museum will add a holiday blues pop-up bar, “CLUB FEZZY”, where attendees can enjoy music, decor and themed drink menu while exploring the exhibits from the early evolution of Blues to today’s hits. The exclusive access to the Museum will open 90 minutes before the show begins.

[The National Blues Museum](#), which opened in 2016, preserves the legacy and honors the history of Blues - the root of all American music with some of the deepest roots in St. Louis. The Museum’s Legends Room and stage for Q BROTHERS CHRISTMAS CAROL has hosted musicians from around the world and some of the most notable names in modern Blues music.

GET THE DETAILS

- Performances will take place November 21 - December 23, Wednesday-Saturday at 8 p.m. and a 3 p.m. matinee on Saturdays. (25 PERFORMANCES IN TOTAL)
- Tickets will go on sale to the public on Tuesday, October 17, at 10 a.m. at stlshakes.org. Festival members can enjoy early access starting Friday, October 13.
- Prices range from \$35-\$75 per person. And include exclusive after-hours admission to the National Blues Museum exhibits and holiday pop-up bar “CLUB FEZZY”.
- **The performances will last approximately 80 minutes**, with no intermission. The doors and bar to the museum will open to ticket holders at 6:30 p.m./1:30 p.m.

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- The National Blues Museum is located at 615 Washington Avenue in Downtown St. Louis, across from the MX Building and 7th Street Parking Garage.

Visit stlshakes.org/carol for more information.

Support for the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival 2023-2024 Season comes from Edward Jones, the Whitaker Foundation, Switch, the Regional Arts Commission, the Missouri Arts Council, The Bellwether Foundation, The Trio Foundation of St. Louis and many other generous individual contributions.

LINK TO MEDIA ASSETS: <https://stlshakes.smugmug.com/Q-Brothers-Carol/>

COMPANY BIOS

The St. Louis Shakespeare Festival strives to foster community and joy across the St. Louis region through the Shakespearean tradition of art for all. Since 2001, the Festival has grown from producing a single production of Shakespeare in Forest Park to a year-round season of impactful programming in exciting and accessible venues throughout the bi-state area. Artistic and education programs reach over 50,000 patrons and students each season. Their award-winning work has been featured in the *New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Bloomberg News*.

Q Brothers Collective (CREATORS) Hailing from Chicago and known worldwide for their hip-hop add-rap-tations of Shakespeare plays and other classic works, the Q Brothers are a collective of humans who make art that rhymes. You might have heard JQ's work as composer for Hulu's new hit TV show *The Bear*. From their recent family-friendly album *Buggin*, to their freestyle-inspired sets at Lollapalooza and Austin City Limits to DJ'ing dance parties for people of all ages and backgrounds, one thing is certain – these brothers are about family. They love what they do, and they love doing it for you! @qbrothers1

JQ (COMPOSER, CO-DIRECTOR)

Jackson Doran (**JAX**) (**CO-DIRECTOR**) is an actor, writer, and arts educator. He is the Education Director and one of the four core members of The Q Brothers Collective. Highlights include “ms. estrada” with The Flea in New York, “Long Way Home”.With the Chicago Children’s Choir, a nine-year sit down run at the Tony Award-winning Chicago Shakespeare Theater with, “Q Brothers Christmas Carol.” He has also toured the world performing in The Q Brothers’ “Othello: The Remix.” Originally commissioned and premiering at The Globe Theatre in 2012, “Othello: The Remix” has travelled to Poland, Germany, UAE, New Zealand, Romania, and Australia with sit down runs at The Edinburgh Fringe, London’s Unicorn Theater and Off-Broadway presented by John Leguizamo. Other theater credits include the Kristoffer Diaz world premiere of “Welcome to Arroyo’s” at American Theater Company, a year-long internship at The Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Funk it Up About Nothin’ (World Tour), playwriting commissions at Steppenwolf, Writer’s Theater, The City of Chicago, and adjunct professorships at Northwestern

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University, The University of Iowa, UIC, and Connecticut College. He is a member of the Chicago comedy and rap group, The Rap Pack.

Steph Paul (CHOREOGRAPHER) is a first-gen Haitian-American director/choreographer who clears space for uninhibited physical truth. What comes up must come out. Her work includes *Sanctuary City* (Steppenwolf Theatre), *How to Defend Yourself* (New York Theatre Workshop, Victory Gardens, Humana Festival), *Where the Mountain Meets the Sea* (Manhattan Theatre Club, Humana Festival), *The Royale* (Kansas City Repertory Theatre, City Theatre, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), *The Wolves* (Studio Theatre). Additional credits include Lincoln Center, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Goodman Theatre, Definition Theatre. International credits include NYU Abu Dhabi, Royal Opera House Muscat, National Theatre of Scotland. Steph is a Princess Grace Award-winner in Theatre, Helen Hayes Award-winner and a St. Louis Theatre Circle and Jeff Award nominee. She is a proud NYTW Usual Suspect, Chicago Dance Crash Artistic Associate, and SDC member. Steph is also a big fan of curating playlists and watching all of the sports. www.stephpaul.com

Edgar Miguel Sanchez (SCROOGE), born in the Dominican Republic, raised in Miami, FL, earned his BFA in Acting from The Theater School at Depaul University with a minor in Sociology. Chicago acting credits include: *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (Remy Bumppo), *Toni Stone; Sweat, stop. reset.* (Goodman Theatre), *Romeo in Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, Twelfth Night* (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); *In The Next Room or the vibrator play* (TimeLine); *Hobo King, Brothers of the Dust* (Congo Square); *Water by the Spoonful, Native Son* (The Court); *The Wheel* (Steppenwolf). REGIONAL: *Hamlet in Hamlet* (GableStage); *Twelfth Night, Richard III, Troilus and Cressida, The Admirable Crichton* (APT); *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Othello, The Comedy of Errors* (OSF). *Fences* (ATC, Indiana Rep, Milwaukee Rep); *Water by the Spoonful* (TheatreSquared); *That Must Be The Entrance To Heaven* (Urbanite), FILM: *Blueprint, 3 Days* TELEVISION: *Chicago MED, Chicago P.D, Sense8*. @edgar_miguel_sanchez

Victor Musoni* is an actor, writer and dancer excited to make his St.Louis debut. Select theater credits include *Toni Stone* (Goodman); *The Most Spectacularly Lamentable Trial of Miz Martha Washington, Columbinus* (Steppenwolf); *What to Send Up When it Goes Down* (Congo Square); *Queen of the Night* (Victory Gardens); *America V2.1, are you ready to smash white things?, No Child* (Definition Theatre Company); *La Havana Madrid* (The Den Theater); Television and film: *Me, We; The Tensile Strength of Air; 61st Street; WHOLE; Chicago Med* and *6x9*. Choreography: *Alaiyo* (Definition); Musoni is an ensemble member of Definition Theatre and is represented by Paonessa Talent Agency

Mo Shipley (They/Them)* is a multidisciplinary artist from Chicago, IL. Theatre credits include Ginevra Fanshawe in Lookingglass Theatre's world premiere of *Villette, Corduroy* (Emerald City Theatre), *Southern Gothic* (Windy City Playhouse), a puppeteer in Rough House/Adventure Stages' *Stranger and The Shadow*, and a collaborator/deviser within Free Street Theatre's 50 in 50! A City-Wide Celebration. Mo has also worked with Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Forks & Hope, Red Tape Theatre, Trap Door Theatre, Haven, and Strawdog Theatre. You can view some of Mo's most recent work in *I Didn't Mean to Go Mental*, a new comedy series from Carly Glenn and Almost Pi Productions. Mo is immeasurably

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grateful to their partner and chosen family for their boundless support and love.

<http://www.moshiplay.com>

Maya Vinice Prentiss is an SAFD Certified Actor-Combatant, fight choreographer, and Dialect Coach. Her Chicago acting credits include *Clyde's*; *School Girls; or, the African Mean Girls Play* the world premiere of *How to Catch Creation* (Goodman Theatre), *An Octoroon* (Definition Theatre Company); *Eclipsed* (Jeff Awards Nominee- Pegasus Theatre Company); and *Romeo and Juliet* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre). Regional credits include *School Girls; or, the African Mean Girls Play* (TheatreSquared); *As You Like It*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Caesar* (Illinois Shakespeare Festival); and *Origin Story* (Illinois Theatre). TV credits include *The Chi* (Showtime). Her fight direction credits include *EthiopianAmerica* (Jeff Award Recipient, Definition Theatre), *The Most Lamentable Trial of Miz Martha Washington* (Steppenwolf Theatre); *Measure for Measure* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre); *Marie Antoinette and the Magical Negroes* (The Story Theatre), *Windwalkers*, *The House of Baba Yaga* (The Impostors Theatre) and *August: Osage County* (The Station Theatre). Dialect Coaching credits include *The Tragedy of King Christophe* (The House Theatre) and *School Girls; or, the African Mean Girls Play* (Goodman Theatre). She holds a BA in Drama from Spelman College and an MFA in Acting from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Mel Bady (DJ) is passionate about bringing love into whatever she does. She uses theatre and dance as a tool to empathize with others and to share real human experiences. She graduated with a BFA in Acting from Missouri State University. Since then, she has performed and worked closely with many local companies like St.Louis Black Rep Company, Consuming Kinetics Dance Company, and TLT Productions. Her latest Shakespeare performance was as Hortensio in *The Taming of The Shrew* with Chicago-based Stonesoup Shakespeare Company, and Lysander in St. Louis Festival's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Currently, Mel enjoys teaching Drama and Dance at Kipp Inspire Middle School, serving her community as a doula, and, most of all, being a Wife and Mother. She is thrilled to have the opportunity to work with St. Louis Shakespeare Festival again.