



PATRICK SAINT ANGE AS JOHN LEWIS &
MYLES WALKER AS UNCLE OTIS

PHOTO BY MARSH PHOTOGRAPHY

***HERO: THE BOY FROM TROY:
A NEW MUSICAL ABOUT YOUNG JOHN LEWIS***

by Nambi E. Kelley

Music, Lyrics, and Sound by Joe Plummer

Directed by Daniel Carlton

Saturday, March 1, 2025, at 11am

Tryon Festival Theatre

PROGRAM

HERO: THE BOY FROM TROY
A NEW MUSICAL ABOUT YOUNG JOHN LEWIS

by Nambi E. Kelley

Music, Lyrics, and Sound by Joe Plummer

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Jayden is stuck in detention with a book about Congressman John Lewis, but he thinks that history has nothing to teach him. Together we go on a musical journey through the decades that shows how the heroes in the Civil Rights movement inspired young John Lewis to protest injustice and get into 'good trouble.' As John meets Rosa Parks and Dr. King and ultimately becomes a leader and American hero himself, Jayden learns how he too can take a stand.

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CAST

JOHN LEWIS

Patrick Saint Ange

DR. KING/DEDDY/UNCLE OTIS/JIM BONE

Myles Walker

URSULA/WILLIE MAE/ROSA PARKS

Matelyn Alicia

FEMALE COVER

Brette-Raia Curah

MALE COVER

Jelani Pitcher



Nambi E. Kelley (Writer) was a season 2 co-producer on Peacock's *Bel Air*. Previous television writing credits include: *Lady In The Lake* (Apple) *Our Kind of People* (Fox), and *The Chi* (Showtime). She is also in development with Lagralane on a film project TBA. Ms. Kelley play *Re-Memori*

was just presented at WP's Pipeline Festival in New York City and had a celebrated production at Penumbra Theatre in Minnesota, where it was chosen as one of the top 10 productions of the year. She is also winner of The Prince Prize, which grants \$75,000 to Nambi and Court Theatre for a new play based on the life of the great Kwame Ture/Stokely Carmichael. Nambi was named a Dramatists Guild Foundation Fellow and New Victory LabWorks Fellow. She recently completed a residency at New Victory Theatre through the LabWorks Program for BIPOC artists in New York City, which gifted Nambi \$15,000 to participate in workshops and develop the musical performed here at Krannert Center, *Hero: The Boy From Troy*, which is touring regionally in 2024–25. Nambi is a former playwright-in-residence at the National Black Theatre, the Goodman Theatre, and a former Dramatists Guild Fellow. She was a finalist for the Francesca Primus Award and The Kevin Spacey Foundation Award. She was chosen by Toni Morrison to adapt Morrison's *Jazz*, which premiered at Baltimore Center Stage in 2017. Her adaptation of Richard Wright's *Native Son* (Sam French, Concord Theatricals) premiered in New York produced by the The Acting Company at The Duke on 42nd Street in July 2019, and was nominated for New York's Drama League Awards, winning Best Production from the AUDELCO

Awards. The world premiere of *Native Son* was presented to critical acclaim at Court Theatre, received nominations for five Jeff Awards, including winning production of the year, and was the highest grossing straight play produced in Court Theatre's history. *Native Son* is also on the Kilroy's List 2015, in the top 7 percent of new plays by female and trans* authors nominated by literary managers, directors, and other artists polled across the country. www.nambikelley.com (Photo by Jane Feldman Photography)



Joe Plummer (Music, Lyrics, Sound) is a true renaissance man and has found a successful niche as a musical playwright. *Get Ready*, his premiere production alongwith Jaye Stewart, has been produced by Victory Gardens Theatre (BTA Award for Best New Writing of a Play; Jeff Award nomination),

ETA Theatre (Jeff Award nomination for choreography), The Ensemble Theatre, and Penumbra Theatre. His musical *I Got'cha: The Story of Joe Tex and the Soul Clan* at The Black Ensemble Theatre in Chicago garnered Joe and his co-writer David Barr III two Black Excellence Awards, and the New Horizon Theatre production in Pittsburgh took 11 Onyx Awards. Joe's third musical *Nothing but the Blues* was presented at the Black Ensemble Theatre (Jeff Award nomination; 10 BlackTheatre Alliance Awards), New Horizon Theatre, and onboard Celebrity Cruise ship's Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise. Joe's next musical, *Vee Jay Records*, co-written with Sanetta Gipson, had its first reading at The Chicago Dramatists. A film version is being produced by and stars Oscar nominee Viola Davis. www.tri-coastalentertainment.com



Daniel Carlton (Director) is a celebrated Harlem, New York-based director, actor, storyteller, playwright, poet, lyricist, and teaching artist. Carlton has shared his storytelling artistry in schools, jails, homeless shelters, museums, parks, international stages, dance companies, and

Off-Broadway. Recent TYA credits include: *Jabari Dreams Of Freedom* and *Hero: The Boy from Troy* (First Woman Productions, Director), *Freedom Flight* and *Keep Marching* (Mad River Theater Works, Director, Playwright, Lyricist), *Freedom Riders* (Mad River Theater Works, Director), and *Finding North* (RainART Productions, Actor, Collaborator with David Gonzalez). Other credits include *March On* (Blackberry Productions at Apollo Theater School Day Live, National Black Theater Festival, Playwright, Director), *Pigfoot Mary Says Goodbye to the Harlem Renaissance* (Playwright), *A Whistle In Mississippi* (Co-playwright with Michael Green), *Memories of Self* (Playwright), *Hidden Inside* (Co-written with Nambi E. Kelley, Keen Teens, Concord Publications), *This Ability* (Director, Co-written with Nambi E. Kelley, Chicago Children's Theater), *So Journey to the Truth* (Co-written with Nambi E. Kelley, Syracuse Stage/Regional Tour), and *JazzReach* (Narrator). Other favorites include *The Venus Project* (Actor, Johannesburg), *Children of War Theater Project* (Actor), *The Eagle in Harlem* (Writer-Storyteller), *Check Yo Invites Parts 1 and 2* (HarlemStage, Actor/Performer). (Photo by Claudia Hayden)



Akron, Ohio native **Matelyn Alicia** (Ursula/Willie Mae/Rosa Parks) appeared in her first ever theatrical production as 1920s blues singer Bessie Smith, in Mabel Robinson's *MAHALIA: Queen of Gospel* on the main stage of the 2007 National Black Theater Festival. She would appear with the NC

Black Repertory in multiple NBTF mainstage productions, including Regina Taylor's *CROWNS*. In 2015 she starred in the world premiere of Nate Jacobs' *Jazz Hot Mamas*, with the West Coast Black Theater Troupe. In 2018, after multiple European tours with New York's DP Joubert, she released her first project of original works, *God's Butterfly LIVE!* She made her international jazz solo artist debut performing in the Vineyard Concert Series throughout the Southwest of France during summer 2023, and her Off Broadway debut in summer 2024 in Nora Cole's *The World According to Micki Grant*, for which she won an AUDELCO Award for Lead Actress in a Musical. She is ecstatic to take on this empowering story by the brilliant Nambi E Kelley!



Patrick Saint Ange (John Lewis) (you can call him Saint) is a first-generation Haitian-American actor, writer, and filmmaker. This New York native is an alumnus of Binghamton University, where he graduated with degrees in sociology and English. Saint is a former 2050 Admin Fellow at New York

Theatre Workshop, but you might recognize him

most from his role as Lucas in *Stranger Sings: The Parody Musical* at the Straz Center.



Jamaican/West Indian performer **Brette Raia Curah** (Female Cover) is a recent graduate from New World School of the Arts with a BFA in the music theatre program.

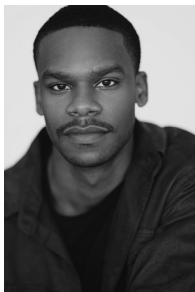
Notable credits include *Summer: The Donna Summer Musical* (Dara), *AreaStage* (Understudy Sebastian), *Arsht's*

City Theatre's Summer Shorts, *Company* (Amy), *Oskuneru Mainstreet Players* (Oya). With love to Mum and Pupa. Jahweh.



Jelani Pitcher (Male Cover) is an award-winning New York City-based actor and artist, originally from Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He has performed on stages around the country, but some favorite recent credits include: *Trouble in Mind* (Franklin Stage Company), *Topdog/Underdog* (Fleetwood-

Jourdain Theatre), *My Children! My Africa!* (HartBeat Ensemble), *King Lear* (Theater at Monmouth), and *Jabari Dreams of Freedom* (Second National Tour). Love and blessings to his brilliant wife, Brianna, to his family and friends, and to everyone who had a hand in creating this beautiful show! Proud alum of Ithaca College. jelanipitcher.com



Myles Walker (Dr. King, Deddy, Uncle Otis, Jim Bone) is enjoyed to be making his musical theatre debut. Myles is a stage and screen actor based in Atlanta and New York. He graduated from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. Some of his credits include

Harbinger, *Sound of the Southside*, and *Love Labour's Lost* at Riverside Park; *Savage Queen* at Theatre Row; and *Picnic* with the Academy company. Myles would like to express immense gratitude to his family and wishes to dedicate his performances to his newborn daughter Cora Eleise and his late grandfather Willie James Parker.

Named for the East African creation story from which her first name comes, **FIRST WOMAN** is award-winning playwright/actress Nambi E. Kelley's production company. First Woman recently finished the third national tour of *Jabari Dreams of Freedom*. Previous work for young audiences penned by Nambi E. Kelley include: *Hero: The Boy from Troy* (Regional Tour), *So Journey to the Truth* (Syracuse Stage, Regional Tour), *Ain't No Black in a Rainbow* (TheatreWorks USA), *Jabari Dreams of Freedom* (Chicago Children's Theatre), *The Blue Shadow* (Lifeline Theatre, music by Joe Plummer), *Peace to the Fourth Power* (HealthWorks Theatre, National Tour), and *The Tale of Nambi and Kintu* (St. Louis Black Repertory Theatre, Regional Tour). Current young audience commissions include: *Hero: The Boy from Troy* (Pittsburgh CLO, music by Joe Plummer) and *This Ability* (co-written with Daniel Carlton, Chicago Children's Theatre).

FW's founder, Nambi E. Kelley, served as curriculum director and actor for LATT Children's Theatre in South Korea, where she toured singing in Korean and English while creating interactive English immersion theatrical lessons for family audiences. She is currently in residence at The New Victory Theatre in New York City as a member of the LabWorks BIPOC Cohort, and is the recipient of Ben & Jerry's Peacemaker of the Year Award for her work on *Peace to the Fourth Power*, a violence prevention play for teens.



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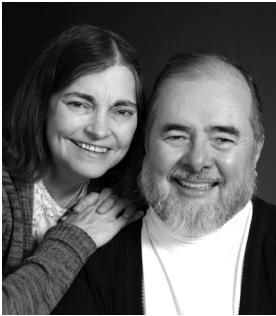
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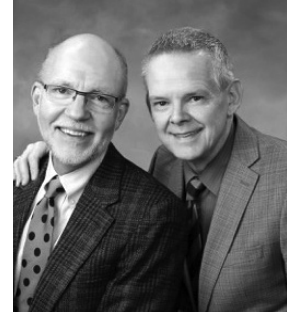
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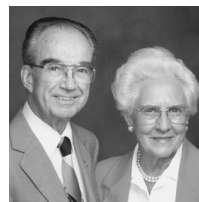
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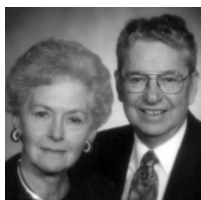
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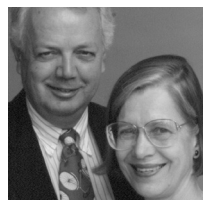
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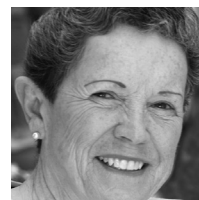
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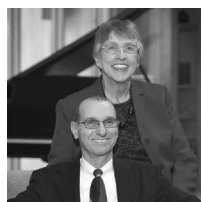
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ANONYMOUS
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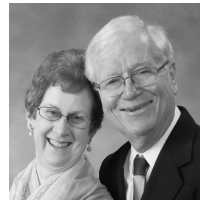
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Rachel Gladd, Performing Arts Events
Coordinator

PROGRAMMING AND ENGAGEMENT

Julieanne Ehre, Assistant Director for
Programming and Engagement
Jason Finkelman, Artistic Director of
Global Arts Performance Initiatives
Emily Laugesen, Co-Director of
Engagement
Sam Smith, Director of Civic Engagement
and Social Practice

ADVANCEMENT

Cheryl Snyder, Director of Advancement
Bethany Whoric, Associate Director
of Advancement
David Drake, Advancement Team
Assistant
Frank Niemeyer, FAA Annual Giving
Officer

OPERATIONS

Director's Office

Zia Moon, Krannert Center Showcase
Director, Office and Communications
Support Specialist
Vanessa Lane, Office Manager

Building Operations

John O. Williams, Facility Manager
Tony Mapson, Assistant Facility Manager
Joe Butsch, Building Electrician

Jared Painter, Assistant Chief Building
Operations Engineer
Scott Butler, Eric Carr, Emmett Catlin,
Austin Dearth, Sara Dietrich, John
Ekstrom, Jessica Fancher, Bryan
Franzen, Mark Lashbrook, Jacob Lerch,
Chad Schwenk, Attendants
Glenda Dalton, Operations Office
Support Associate

MARKETING

Maureen V. Reagan, Associate Director
for Administration and Patron
Experience

Communications

Sean Kutzko, Assistant Communications
Director
Nicholas Mulvaney, Art Director
Jodee Stanley, Program and Web Editor

Public Services

Amy Thomas, Food Services Director
Elizabeth Henke, Stage 5 Bar Manager
Michael Bunting, Hospitality Supervisor
Whitney Havice, Ticketing and Patron
Services Director
Ann-Marie Dittmann, Patron Services
Assistant Director
Ty Mingo, Assistant Ticket Services
Director
Jon Proctor, Nick Wurl, Ticket Sales
Supervisors
Adrian Rochelle, Front of House
Performance Supervisor
Scott Leon, Community Service Officer

PRODUCTION

Terri Anne Ciofalo, Director
of Production
Maria Miguens, Production Manager

Audio Department

Rick Scholwin, Audio Director
Alec LaBau, Associate Audio Director/
Video Director
Tyler Knowles, Assistant Audio Director

Costume Shop

Andrea Bouck, Costume Director
Richard Gregg, Costume Rentals Director/
Wardrobe Adviser/Associate Costume
Director

Paige Stewart-Rankins, Hair & Makeup
Supervisor
Julianna Steitz, First Hand
April McKinnis, EB McTigue,
Cutters/Drapers
Kari Little-McKinney, Theatrical Stitcher

Lighting Department

Lisa Kidd, Lighting Director
David Krupla, Associate Lighting Director
Nick Jukes, Theatrical Lighting
Coordinator

Properties Department

Adriane Binky Donley, Properties Director
Kira Lyon, Assistant Properties Director

Scene Shop

Ryan Schultz, Technical Director
Tatsuya Ito, Associate Technical Director
Bill Kephart, Scene Shop Chief Clerk
Bobby Reynolds, Theatrical Scene Shop
Coordinator
Liam Romano, Kayley Woolums, Theatrical
Scene Shop Assistants

PERFORMING ARTS BUSINESS SERVICE CENTER

Macauley Allen, Business Services
Specialist
Debbie Delaney, Accounting Staff

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE AT THE CENTER

We work to create the best possible setting for the experiences you seek and find here.

NECESSARIES

Restrooms are located in the foyers of Foellinger Great Hall, Tryon Festival Theatre, and Colwell Playhouse; the east entrances on the Lobby level; and in each elevator lobby on Level 1 and Level 3. Lobby restrooms and one restroom in each elevator lobby are fully accessible and contain baby-changing stations.

Ushers will be happy to provide you cough drops courtesy of St. Joseph Apothecary, or disposable foam earplugs if the place starts rockin'.

If you or a companion needs medical assistance, contact an usher or other staff member.

Please take a moment before the performance to note the theatre exits nearest to you. If it becomes necessary to evacuate the theatre, please remain calm, follow the instructions of the house staff, and exit in an orderly fashion to the appropriate safe meeting location, which will be announced to you.

PHONES AND DEVICES

The use of cell phones, cameras, and recording devices during performances is prohibited unless otherwise announced from the stage.

LATE ARRIVALS

As a courtesy to performers and audience members, latecomers will be seated only at times selected in advance by the artist. Should you find that you've arrived late to a performance, our Patron Services staff will keep you informed about the earliest seating opportunity.

LOST ITEMS

If you are in need of Lost and Found, please visit the Patron Services counter. We will do our best to reunite object and owner!

TICKET RETURNS

If you find you can't attend a performance, please contact the Ticket Office in advance, preferably by 6pm the day before the performance (kran-tix@illinois.edu). We never charge a handling fee on ticket transactions.

ACCESSIBILITY

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts is committed to making experiences accessible for all patrons, and we are delighted to provide a number of services to assist you. Krannert Center is equipped with an assisted listening system, wheelchair-accessible and no-step/few-step seating, and large-print programs, Braille programs, and American Sign Language interpreters are available with three weeks' advance notice.

For assistance regarding your visit, please email:

Para ayuda en relación con su visita, favor de enviar un email a:

Pour vous aider dans votre visite, prière de nous envoyer un courriel à:

欢迎! 如若您对您的造访需要帮助, 请发送电子邮件至:

स्वागत हे! अगर आपको अपने रहने के लिए मदद चाहिए, ईमेल कीजिए:

환영합니다! 방문에 관해 도움이 필요하실 때에는...
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PATRONSERVICES@KRANNERTCENTER.ILLINOIS.EDU
217.333.9716

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krantz center
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