



For Immediate Release, Please Contact

Frances White, Director of Media Relations, fwhite@milwaukeerep.com

www.MilwaukeeRep.com | @MilwRep | [#WeRepMilwaukee](https://www.instagram.com/WeRepMilwaukee)

Milwaukee Repertory Theater Presents

Marie and Rosetta

Starring Alexis J Roston and Bethany Thomas in the Stiemke Studio

October 22 – December 22, 2024

September 25, 2024 (Milwaukee, WI) [Milwaukee Repertory Theater](http://www.MilwaukeeRep.com) presents *Marie and Rosetta*, the unsung story of the Rock 'n' Roll's roof-raising soul sisters, October 22 – December 22, 2024, in the Stiemke Studio. Written by acclaimed playwright **George Brant** (*Grounded*) and directed **E. Faye Butler**, a Nine-time Jeff Award-winning director who was recently inducted into the Women in the Arts Museum in Washington, D.C., *Marie and Rosetta* features "two mind-blowingly great performances" (Chicago Reader) by Rep favorites **Alexis J Roston** (*Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*; *Nina Simone: Four Women*) as Marie Knight and Wisconsin native **Bethany Thomas** (*Ragtime*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*) as Sister Rosetta Tharpe. Bethany Thomas is currently nominated for a [Chicago Jeff Award](#) for her portrayal of Sister Rosetta Tharpe in the Northlight Theatre production last summer where she brought the house down night after night.

Before Little Richard, Johnny Cash, and Jimi Hendrix, Sister Rosetta Tharpe's groundbreaking blend of gospel music, swing rhythms and fierce electric guitar made her an unconventional music superstar in the 1930s and 40s. Acclaimed writer George Brant (*Grounded*) unearths the unsung roots of the fearless "Godmother of Rock 'n' Roll" and her wide-eyed protégée Marie Knight, as they begin their revolutionary ascent to become one of the most influential teams in music history.

Deemed "Dramatically rich, musically irresistible with one powerhouse number after another" by the Chicago Sun Times, *Marie and Rosetta* is directed by **E. Faye Butler** (Nine-time Jeff Award Winner) whose personal history runs deep with Sister Rosetta as she is the god daughter of American gospel singer Mahalia Jackson, a contemporary of Sister Rosetta. The production features set design by **John Culbert** (*The Triumph of Love*, Court Theatre and Jeff Award), costume design by **McKinley Johnson** (*Ain't Misbehavin': The Fats Waller Musical*, Drury Lane Theatre), lighting design by **Jared Gooding** (*Songs for Nobodies*, *Nonsense*, Milwaukee Rep), sound design by **Rick Sims** (*Moby Dick*, Lookingglass Theatre), stage managed by **Jade Bruno**, featuring music direction and keys played by **Morgan E. Stevenson** and **Benjamin Oglesby-Davis** on guitar.

Marie and Rosetta is made possible by Executive Producer Maureen McCabe and Associate Producers Rania and Pat Dempsey and Kate and Chris Hermann.

Marie and Rosetta runs October 22 – December 22, 2024, in the Stiemke Studio. Opening night is set for Friday, October 25 at 8pm. To purchase tickets to go to www.MilwaukeeRep.com, call the Ticket Office at **414-224-9490** or visit in person at **108 E Wells Street** in Downtown Milwaukee.

For more information, please visit www.MilwaukeeRep.com.

::Fact Sheet::



Marie and Rosetta

By George Brant | Directed by E. Faye Butler

OCTOBER 22 – DECEMBER 22, 2024

Stiemke Studio

Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
10/22	10/23	10/24	10/25	10/26	10/27
7:30pm •	7:30pm •	7:30pm •	8:00pm ▲	3:00pm 8:00pm	2:00pm 7:00pm
10/29	10/30	10/31	11/1	11/2	11/3
7:30pm	1:30pm 7:30pm	7:30pm	7:30pm	3:00pm 8:00pm	2:00pm 7:00pm
11/5	11/6	11/7	11/8	11/9	11/10
6:30pm EB	1:30pm 7:30pm TB	7:30pm AD	7:30pm	3:00pm 8:00pm	2:00pm 7:00pm
11/12	11/13	11/14	11/15	11/16	11/17
	7:30pm TB	7:30pm	7:30pm ASL	3:00pm 8:00pm	2:00pm
11/19	11/20	11/21	11/22	11/23	11/24
	1:30pm 7:30pm	7:30pm	7:30pm	3:00pm 8:00pm	2:00pm 7:00pm
11/26	11/27	11/28	11/29	11/30	12/1
7:30pm	7:30pm		7:30pm	3:00pm 8:00pm	2:00pm 7:00pm
12/3	12/4	12/5	12/6	12/7	12/8
7:30pm	7:30pm TB	7:30pm	7:30pm	3:00pm 8:00pm	2:00pm 7:00pm
12/10	12/11	12/12	12/13	12/14	12/15
7:30pm	7:30pm	7:30pm	7:30pm	3:00pm 8:00pm	2:00pm 7:00pm
12/17	12/18	12/19	12/20	12/21	12/22
7:30pm	1:30pm 7:30pm	7:30pm	7:30pm	3:00pm 8:00pm	2:00pm ♦
• Preview ▲ Opening Night EB Early Performance AD Audio Described TB TalkBack ASL American Sign Language ♦ Closing Night					

All performances are subject to change.

Marie and Rosetta

By George Brant

Directed by E. Faye Butler

October 22 – December 22, 2024 (Opening Night Friday, October 25 at 8pm) in the Stiemke Studio

Running time: 110 minutes with no intermission

Talks and Events

Early Bird Performance: Tuesday, November 5 at 6:30pm

TalkBacks: Wednesday evenings following the performance Nov 6,13 and December 4

PRIDE Night: Friday, November 22 – Enjoy pre-show social hour with complimentary wine and beer plus the sale of a ticket for \$30 a person.

Dinner Dialogues Series: Monday, December 16 at location TBD. Topic is What are you willing to sacrifice for success with guest speaker Judge Kristy Yang.. Registration is required and the cost is \$30. [Register here.](#)

Post-Show Panels:

Friday, November 15 – *MKE's Women of Music* featuring moderator Element Everest Banks, music director HYFIN and panelists Shadi, Shle Berry and Nalani.

Tuesday, December 10 – *Successful Black and Brown Women in the Workplace* featuring panelists Dr. Lia Knox founder and CEO of Knox Behavioral Health Solutions; Tammy Belton-Davis founder and President of Athena Communications LLC and Milwaukee Rep Board Trustee; and Dr. Kajua Betsy Lor Associate Professor, Chair of the department of Clinical Sciences.

Access Services

Audio-Described Performance: Thursday, November 7 at 7:30pm – the show will be described for patrons who are blind or have low vision.

ASL Performance: Friday, November 15 at 7:30pm – the show will be signed for the deaf or hard of hearing.

Information

Tickets: www.MilwaukeeRep.com, by phone at 414-224-9490, or Ticket Office at 108 E Wells Street, Milwaukee.

Hours: 12noon – 6pm; on performance days the Ticket Office remains open until 15 minutes past curtain.

Student Discounts: Students 18 and under can purchase \$20 tickets for select seating areas.

25 & Under: Select \$20 tickets available for patrons 25 & Under. (Select 25 & Under price at checkout online)

Group Sales: Discounted tickets for parties of 10+. Call 414-290-5340.

Actor Biographies

Alexis J Roston, *Marie Knight*

Alexis was last seen at Milwaukee Rep in *Nina Simone: Four Women*. She is a Chicago native who's most noted for her portrayal of Billie Holiday in *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill* (Joseph Jefferson, Black Excellence and Black Theater Alliance Awards). Other credits include: *First Lady of Song: Alexis J Roston Sings Ella Fitzgerald* at Milwaukee Rep, *Marie and Rosetta* (Marie Knight), *Sister Act* (Deloris Van Cartier), *For Colored Girls...* (Lady in Orange), and *What I Learned in Paris* (Lena Jefferson). Television credits: *Chicago PD*, *Chicago Code*, and *The Chi*.

Bethany Thomas, *Sister Rosetta Tharpe*

Bethany is thrilled to come back to Milwaukee Rep after appearing in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Songs for Nobodies*, *The Color Purple*, *Ragtime*. Other credits include *Natasha*, *Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*, *Once, Into the Woods*, *A Moon For The Misbegotten* (Writers Theatre); *Marie & Rosetta* (Northlight Theatre, Jeff Award Nomination); *A Christmas Carol* (Goodman Theatre); *Moby Dick* (St. Louis Rep); *Iphigenia In*

Aulis (Getty Villa); *The Tempest* (Chicago Shakespeare); *Porgy and Bess* (Court Theatre); plays well with The Fly Honeys, Grelle Duvall, Teatro ZinZanni.

About Milwaukee Repertory Theater

Milwaukee Rep is the largest performing arts organization in Wisconsin with its new artistic home in the Associated Bank Theater Center opening Fall 2025 with three unique performance venues – the Ellen & Joe Checota Powerhouse Theater, Herro-Franke Studio Theater and Stackner Cabaret. For over seven decades, Milwaukee Rep has been a centerpiece of Milwaukee’s vibrant arts and cultural scene with productions ranging from Broadway musicals to Shakespeare to American Classics and New Works that are entertaining, inclusive and impactful. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Mark Clements and Executive Director Chad Bauman, Milwaukee Repertory Theater ignites positive change in the cultural, social and economic vitality of its community by creating world-class theater experiences that entertain, provoke and inspire meaningful dialogue among an audience representative of Milwaukee’s rich diversity. More information is available at www.MilwaukeeRep.com

###