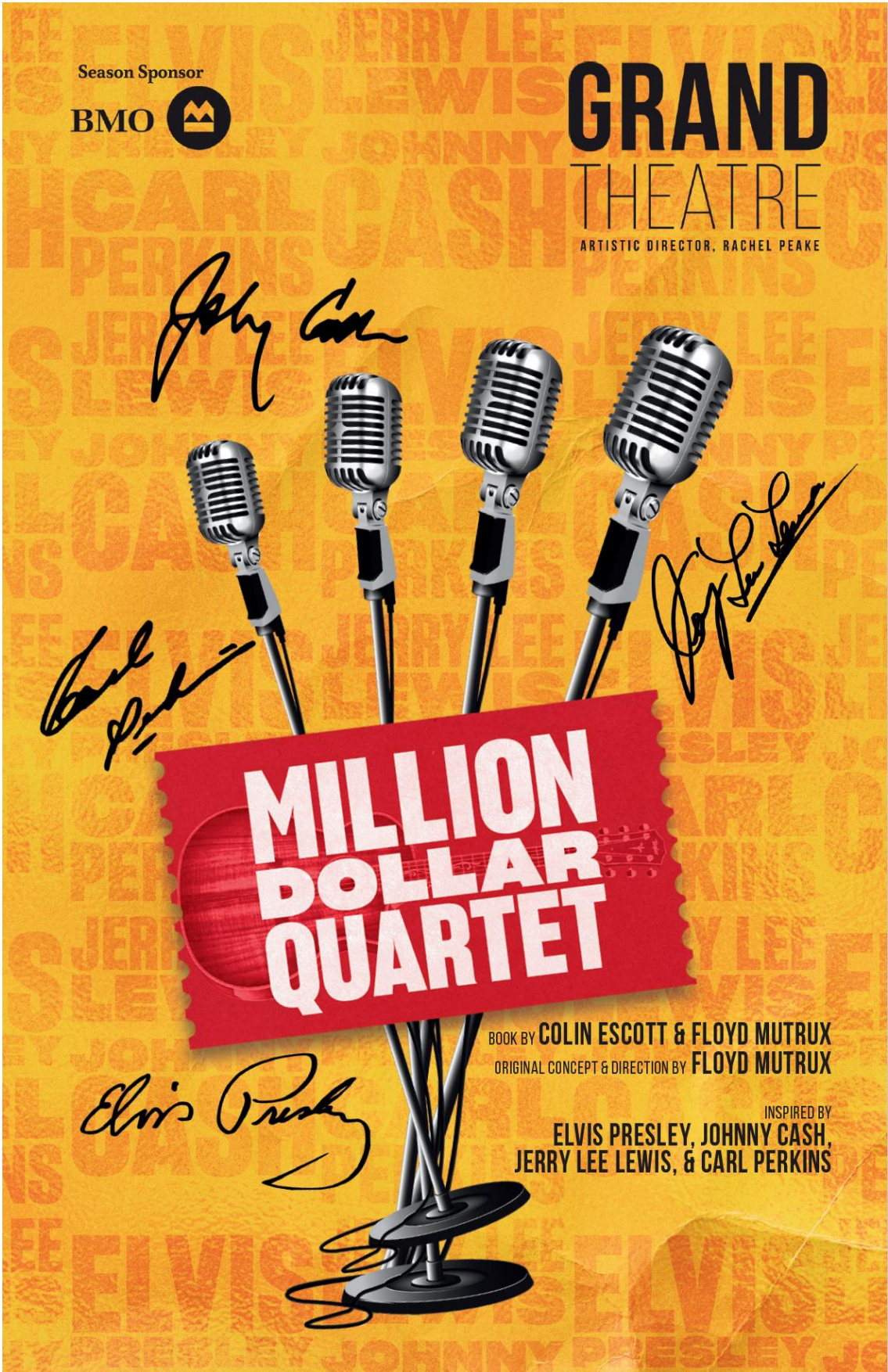


Season Sponsor



GRAND THEATRE

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, RACHEL PEAKE



MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET

BOOK BY COLIN ESCOTT & FLOYD MUTRUX

ORIGINAL CONCEPT & DIRECTION BY FLOYD MUTRUX

INSPIRED BY

ELVIS PRESLEY, JOHNNY CASH,
JERRY LEE LEWIS, & CARL PERKINS

Elvis Presley

Johnny Cash

Carl Perkins

Jerry Lee Lewis

GRANDTHEATRE

SPRIET STAGE, APRIL 16 TO MAY 11, 2024

OPENING NIGHT APRIL 19, 2024

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

CAST

CARL PERKINS	TYLER CHECK
JERRY LEE LEWIS	CHRISTO GRAHAM
W. S. "FLUKE" HOLLAND	JUSTIN HAN
DYANNE / DANCE CAPTAIN	KELLY HOLIFF
SAM PHILLIPS	OMAR ALEX KHAN
JAY PERKINS / MUSIC CAPTAIN	ERIK LARSON
STANDBY	ALEX PANNETON
JOHNNY CASH	ADAM STEVENSON
ELVIS PRESLEY	MICHAEL VANHEVEL

CREATIVE TEAM

DIRECTOR/CHOREOGRAPHER	JULIE TOMAINO
MUSIC DIRECTOR	PATRICK BOWMAN
SET DESIGNER	JOSHUA QUINLAN*
COSTUME DESIGNER	LAURA DELCHIARO*
LIGHTING DESIGNER	MICHELLE RAMSAY*
SOUND DESIGNER	BRIAN KENNY*
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/CHOREOGRAPHER	HANNAH ELIAS
DIALECT COACH	ALISON MATTHEWS
STAGE MANAGER	KELLY LUFT
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER	JORDAN GUETTER
APPRENTICE STAGE MANAGER	ELYSE WALL

**Indicated designers are represented by the Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659.*



MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

BLUE SUEDE SHOES
WILD ONE
MATCHBOX
WHO DO YOU LOVE?
FOLSOM PRISON BLUES
FEVER
MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS
THAT'S ALRIGHT, MAMA
BROWN-EYED HANDSOME MAN
DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE

ACT II

SIXTEEN TONS
MY BABE
LONG TALL SALLY
PEACE IN THE VALLEY
I WALK THE LINE
I HEAR YOU KNOCKIN'
LET'S HAVE A PARTY
GREAT BALLS OF FIRE
DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE (REPRISE)
HOUND DOG
GHOST RIDERS
SEE YOU LATER, ALLIGATOR
WHOLE LOTTA SHAKIN'

SETTING:

December 4th, 1956. Sun Records Studios. Memphis, Tennessee.
MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET is performed with an intermission.

The Grand Theatre is an active members of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) and engages, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement (CTA), professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association.



MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET is presented through special arrangement with and all authorized performance materials are supplied by Theatrical Rights Worldwide (TRW), 1180 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 640, New York, NY 10036. www.theatricalrights.com.

Originally developed and produced by Relevant Theatricals, John Cossette Productions and Northern Lights, Inc. at Goodman Theatre, Robert Falls, Artistic Director - Roche Shulfer, Executive Director, and transferred to the Apollo Theatre, Chicago, IL, 2008. Produced by the Village Theatre, Issaquah, Washington, Robb Hunt, Producer - Steve Tomplins, Artistic Director, 2007 & Seaside Music Theatre, Daytona Beach, FL, Tippin Davidson, Producer - Lester Malizia, Artistic Director, 2006.

The photographing and video/audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

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GRANDTHEATRE

MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET

STUDY GUIDE

Content Advisory: This play contains racist language and terminology that accurately depicts a time-period where overt racism was even more prevalent than it is today. It also contains theatrical devices including flashing lights and water-based haze, as well as mature content.

Age Recommendation: 12+

Background History

On Tuesday, December 4th, 1956, what started out as a regular recording session at Sun Record Studio, quickly turned into a historical event for Rock ‘n’ Roll history. Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, and Johnny Cash had an impromptu jam session. This was the first and only time they played together.

To learn more: [CLICK HERE.](#)

Million Dollar Quartet

This Tony- Award- nominated jukebox musical was co-written by Colin Escott and Floyd Mutrux. It first premiered in 2006 at Florida’s Seaside Music Theatre, and has since been on Broadway, the West End, and various other theatres. While it was inspired by the spontaneous recording session in 1956, the musical takes 18 months of history and condenses it into one night.

Curriculum Connections

- **Social Science and Humanities** (Gr. 11 – Philosophy: The Big Questions; Gr. 11 – Challenge and Change in Society; Gr. 11 – Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice)
- **Canadian and World Studies** (Gr 11 - American History; Gr. 12 – World History since the Fifteenth Century; Gr. 11 – World History since 1900: Global and Regional Interactions)
- **The Arts** (Drama; Music; Visual Arts)
- **English** (English; Gr. 12 -The Writer’s Craft)

Themes

- ★ Rock ‘n’ Roll
- ★ Legacy
- ★ Fame vs. Sacrifice
- ★ Rebellion



While it was on Broadway (2010-2011):

- Jerry Lee Lewis performed a special onstage encore with MDQ cast members.
- W.S. “Fluke” Holland came backstage after a show and commented, “Boys, I’ve just got one problem-we weren’t that good”.

THE CHARACTERS

Click on the Record beside the Bio to Learn More

Sam Phillips

(January 5, 1923 – July 30, 2003: 80 years old)



Considered the “Founder of Rock ‘n’ Roll”, Sam was the founder of Sun Records. This American producer discovered Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, and many others. He was a towering and charismatic figure in American Music.



James “Jay” Perkins

(April 11, 1930 – October 20, 1958: 28 years old)

Jay performed with his younger brother Carl Perkins, for eight years. Never fully recovering from a car accident in 1956, and being diagnosed with a brain tumour, Jay passed away when he was only 28 years old.

Dyanne (a.k.a. Marilyn Evans)

(1937 – death date unknown)



In 1956, Elvis and Marilyn met while she was a dancer at the New Frontier in Las Vegas. While they were briefly dating, Marilyn stayed at Elvis’ home in Memphis. It was during this time that they stopped by Sun Records, and Elvis played with Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash.



W.S. “Fluke” Holland

(April 22, 1935 – September 23, 2020: 85 years old)

Because he owned a Cadillac, Carl Perkins invited Fluke to be his drummer for a recording session at Sun Records. Never having played any instrument before, Fluke taught himself drums in just a few days. He eventually went on to become one of Sun Records go-to drummers, and was Johnny Cash’s full-time drummer for 40 years. He is considered by many as the “Father of the Drums”.

Elvis Presley

(January 8, 1935 – August 16, 1977: 42 years old)

Sun Records: 1954-1955



Considered the “Father of Rock ‘n’ Roll”, Elvis had a sound and style that uniquely combined his diverse musical influences and challenged the social and racial barriers of the time. Before becoming an international sensation, Elvis started his singing career with Sun Records.



Jerry Lee Lewis

(September 29, 1935 – October 28, 2022: 87 years old)

Sun Records: 1956- 1963

Known as “The Killer”, Jerry Lee Lewis was one of the pioneers for Piano rock. His unique sound was a result of mixing rhythm & blues, boogie woogie, gospel, and country music. He continued to deliver dynamic performances even into his 80s, up until his last concert in 2019.

Carl Perkins

(April 9, 1932 – January 19, 1998: 66 years old)

Sun Records: 1954- 1958



Carl is best known as the writer and singer of the hit rockabilly anthem, “Blue Suede Shoes”. Although he had a series of bad breaks and personal problems that undermined his solo career, Carl went on to receive critical acclaim. He has influenced many guitar players, singers, and songwriters.



Johnny Cash

(February 26, 1932 – September 12, 2003: 71 years old)

Sun Records: 1954-1958

Johnny is considered to be one of the most influential American musicians of the 20th century. His distinctive deep voice, along with the dark clothing he would wear earned him the nickname, “The Man in Black”. Some of his signature songs are “Folsom Prison Blues”, “I Walk the Line”, and “Ring of Fire”.

SONG LIST

Click the record to hear some of the original recording artists



1. BLUE SUEDE SHOES

Written by Carl Perkins

2. REAL WILD CHILD

Written by Johnny Greenan, Johnny O'Keefe, and Dave Owens.

3. MATCHBOX

Written by Carl Perkins

4. WHO DO YOU LOVE

Written by Bo Diddley

5. FOLSOM PRISON BLUES

Written by Johnny Cash

6. FEVER

Written by Eddie Cooley and Otis Blackwell.

7. MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS

Written by Terry Gilkyson, Richard Dehr, and Frank Miller

8. THAT'S ALRIGHT MAMA

Written by Arthur Crudup

9. BROWN EYED HANSOME MAN

Written by Chuck Berry

10. DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE

An African-American Spiritual

11. SIXTEEN TONS

Written by Merle Travis

12. MY BABE

Written by Willie Dixon for Little Walter

13. LONG TALL SALLY

Written by Robert "Bumps" Blackwell, Enotris Johnson, and Little Richard

14. PEACE IN THE VALLEY

Written by Thomas A. Dorsey for Mahalia Jackson

15. I WALK THE LINE

Written by Johnny Cash

16. I HEAR YOU KNOCKIN'

Written by Dave Bartholomew

17. LET'S HAVE A PARTY

Written by Jessie Mae Robinson

18. GREAT BALLS OF FIRE

Written by Otis Blackwell and Jack Hammer

19. HOUND DOG

Written by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller

20. GHOST RIDERS IN THE SKY

Written by Stan Jones

21. SEE YOU LATER ALLIGATOR

Written by Bobby Charles

22. WHOLE LOTTA SHAKIN'

Written by Dave "Curlee" Williams and James Faye "Roy" Hall

PLOT SYNOPSIS



Date:	December 4 th , 1956
Location:	Sun Records Studio in Memphis, Tennessee, U.S.A.
Significance:	Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, and Elvis Presley played together for the first and only time and became known as the Million Dollar Quartet.

Sam Phillips watches from a distance, as Carl, Johnny, Jerry Lee, and Elvis jam together inside the Sun Records recording studio [**“Blue Suede Shoes”**]. When the song finishes, Sam begins to explain how he started Sun Records, and the hard work that went into it. Sam recently sold Elvis’ contract to the recording company RCA, but RCA has given Sam an offer: sell Sun Records to them, to work exclusively with Elvis again. The only catch – RCA wants an answer by the end of the day.

Jay Perkins (bassist), Fluke Holland (drummer), and Jerry Lee Lewis (pianist), are all in the Sun Records studio waiting on Carl Perkins to record a new album. Since he’s paying them to play, Sam encourages the group to start the session without Carl [**“Wild One”**]. Sam tells the story of how he first met Jerry Lee Lewis, and how he helped to develop his career.

While the group plays **“Wild One”**, Carl Perkins walks into the studio. Jerry Lee enthusiastically introduces himself, and Carl is not too impressed with the young piano player at his session. When the group begins playing [**“Matchbox”**], Carl and Jerry Lee quickly begin to butt heads with each other. In an effort to stop Jerry Lee from playing, Carl changes the song to one that doesn’t require piano [**“Who Do You Love”**]. Sam tells the story of how he first met Carl Perkins. **“Blue Suede Shoes”** put Sun Records on the map, and Sam intends to help Carl produce another hit.

Just as Carl starts to lunge at Jerry Lee, Johnny enters the recording studio. After some prompting from Sam, Johnny sings one of his hit songs with the group [**“Folsom Prison Blues”**]. Sam tells the story of how he first met Johnny Cash, and how he made him a star. Because of this success, Sam plans to give Johnny a 3-year extension for his recording contract with Sun Records.

During the last verse of **“Folsom Prison Blues”**, Elvis and his girlfriend Dyanne walk into the studio. As the group catches up and gets to know each other, Dyanne is encouraged to sing a song [**“Fever”**]. Sam jokes with Elvis if he wants to join Sun Records again, and Elvis begins to reminisce about the start of his career [**“Memories are Made of This”**]. Sam tells the story of how he first met Elvis Presley, and how he helped to develop his sound [**“That’s Alright Mama”**]. Although Elvis started becoming quite popular in 1955, Sam was completely broke. Because of this predicament, Sam sold Elvis’ contract to RCA Records for \$40, 000. It

was with this money that Sam was able to pay off all his bills, buy himself a radio station and some stock in the Holiday Inn.

Feeling like Elvis is taking the spotlight during his recording session, Carl storms out of the studio. The brief break gives Sam and Johnny a moment to talk, until Jerry Lee launches into another song [“**Brown-Eyed Handsome Man**”]. Sam urges the group to continue playing, and asks Johnny to start one of the old spirituals he’s always asking to record [“**Down by the Riverside**”]. As Sam and Dyanne head towards the control room, they talk about the RCA deal, and what it means for Elvis. Back in the recording studio, Johnny is playing one of his hits [“**Sixteen Tons**”]. Jerry Lee eventually joins in with [“**My Babe**”], and the two sing their songs as a duet.

Taking a quick break from their jam session in the studio, Carl, Johnny and Dyanne go outside. As they talk, Carl warns Johnny that Sam plans to hand him a contract renewal. While they are all grateful to Sam for starting their careers, they know Sun Records can only take them so far. After finishing the song [“**Long Tall Sally**”], Elvis follows Sam out of the recording studio. When Sam and Elvis come back in, the group is talking about their siblings. Being reminded of the preciousness of life, and what Rock ‘n’ Roll means, they play [“**Peace in the Valley**”], and a couple lines of [“**Temptation**”].

Acknowledging that they’ll soon have to go their separate ways, Johnny Cash sings [“**I Walk the Line**”], and Dyanne leads [“**I Hear You Knockin’**”]. When the group finishes [“**Let’s Have a Party**”], Sam announces a special anniversary – the day Johnny Cash signed with Sun Records. When presenting Johnny with a renewal contract, Sam is shocked to discover that Johnny and Carl Perkins have already signed contracts with Columbia Records. Trying to cut the tension in the room, Jerry Lee tells Sam he’s found his next hit for Sun Records [“**Great Balls of Fire**”].

With a decision needed for RCA by the end of the day, Sam explains that he can’t just walk away from Sun Records. He’s put too much into creating the studio, and he doesn’t want someone else calling the shots. Wanting to remember this moment at the studio, Sam goes to grab a camera. A historic photo is recreated with the group gathering around the piano, preserving the quartet in music history.



December 4th, 1956 at Sun Records
L to R: Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash and Marilyn Evans.

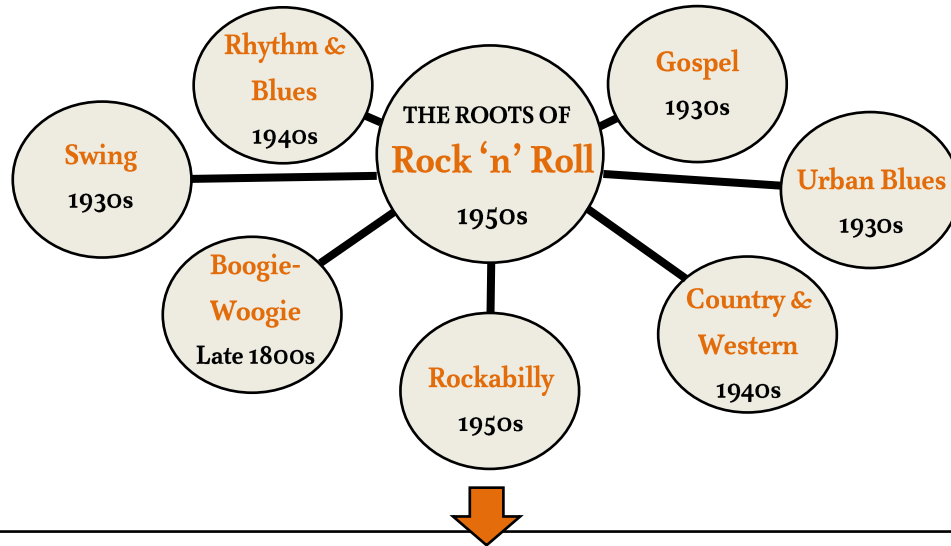


As a musical encore, the group presents a medley of greatest hits: [“**Hound Dog**”], [“**Ghostriders in the Sky**”], [“**See you Later Alligator**”], and [“**Whole Lotta Shakin’**”].

ROCK 'N' ROLL

Click on the [Orange Titles](#) or [Images](#) to learn more!

The following information has been compiled from Carnegie Hall's, *Timeline of African American Music*, by Dr. Portia K. Maultsby



“Rock ‘n’ Roll was the inevitable clash of African American rhythm and blues with elements of swing, boogie-woogie, urban blues, Latin rhythms (clave), Country and Western, Rockabilly, and Tin Pan Alley popular song, all infused with a teenage sense of rebellion and independence that blossomed just after World War II.”¹



[Little Richard](#)



[Fats Domino](#)



[Chuck Berry](#)



[Bo Diddley](#)

“Little Richard, Fats Domino, Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, and several other African American singer/songwriter musicians were among the first to transform the sound of rhythm and blues by introducing new musical elements.”²

“The Rhythm & Blues and Rock ‘n’ Roll songs of Black artists influenced their white counterparts”³

“Several white artists established and/or advanced their careers in rock ‘n’ roll by covering the recordings of Black artists, synthesizing the same rhythm and blues elements that their Black counterparts had updated, and adding elements of country and western music to the mix.”⁴



[Elvis Presley](#)



[Carl Perkins](#)



[Jerry Lee Lewis](#)

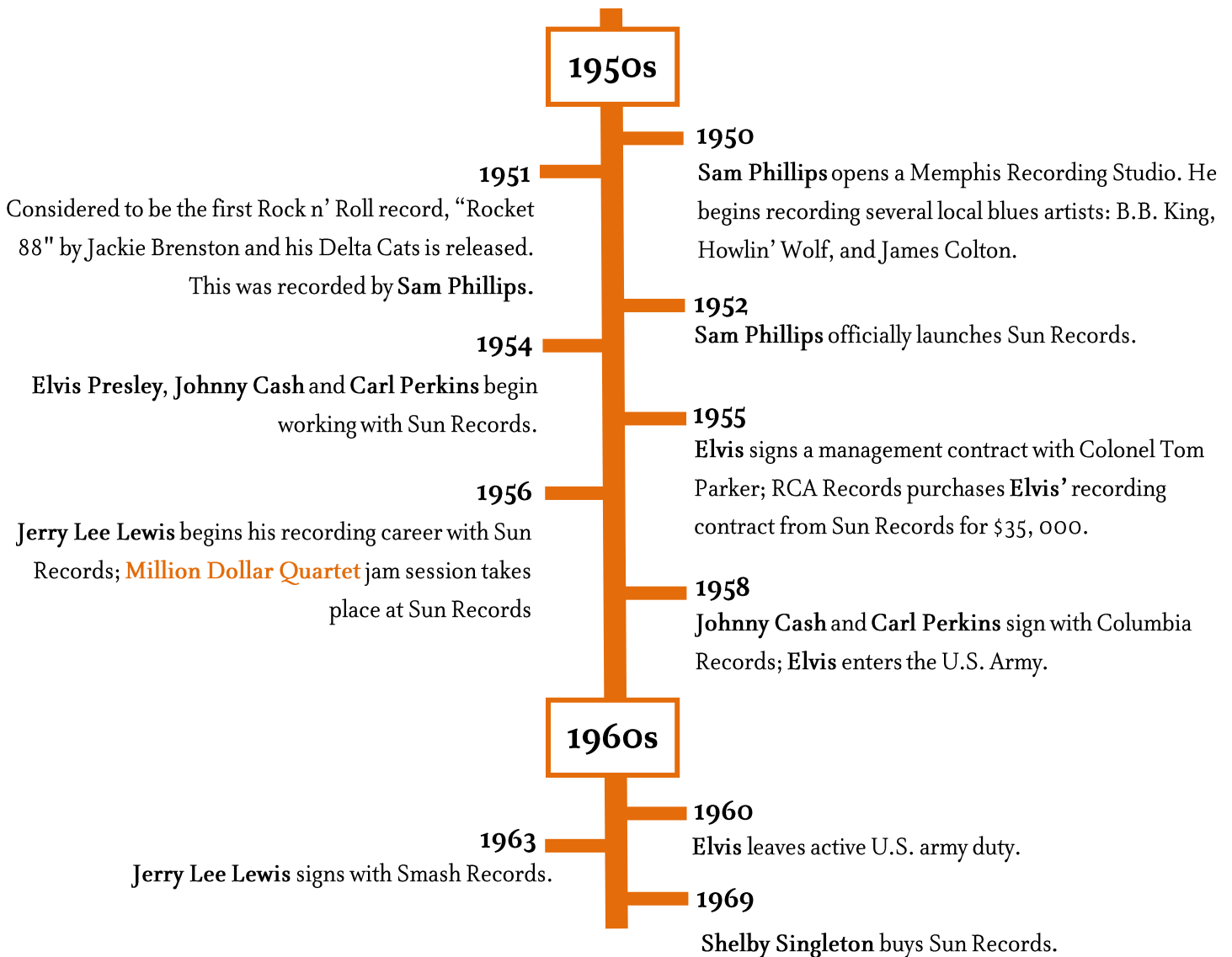


[Johnny Cash](#)

¹⁻⁴ Maultsby, Portia K. and Mahon, Maureen. “Rock ‘n’ Roll”. *A History of African American Music*. 2021.

MDQ TIMELINE

For a detailed Rock n' Roll timeline: [CLICK HERE.](#)



Additional Resources



TeachRock: American History of Rock and Soul

- Complete curriculum (including multimedia materials, handouts, and activities)
- Students explore the history of music genres and how they have both reflected and informed cultural, social, and political developments.

Carnegie Hall: Timeline of African American Music

- A detailed view of the evolution of African American musical genres that span the past 400 years
- Outlines unique characteristics of each genre and style, and offers in depth studies of pioneering musicians who created some of America's most timeless artistic expressions

ROCK AND ROLL HISTORY BUILT ON SONGS UNSUNG, STORIES UNTOLD...

BY NORMA COATES
CONTRIBUTIONS BY BREANNE RITCHIE

Before Elvis Presley walked through the front door of Sun Records, owner and producer, Sam Phillips, was known to declare, "If I could find a white man who had the Negro [sic] feel, I could make a billion dollars." Phillips was talking about the rhythmic vocal stylings and heavy, insistent beat of the predominantly Black rhythm and blues (R&B) genre. Cleveland disk jockey, Alan Freed, coined the name "rock 'n' roll" in 1951, encompassing music with a quick/upbeat tempo, propulsive rhythm, distorted guitar, and honking saxophone solos. Popular music scholar, Maureen Mahon, observes that rock 'n' roll was the inevitable clash of African American R&B with elements of swing, boogie-woogie, urban blues, Latin rhythms (clave), country and western, rockabilly, and Tin Pan Alley popular song. In 1965, New Orleans pianist Fats Domino said, "What they call rock 'n' roll is rhythm and blues. I've been playing it for 15 years in New Orleans."

Growing up in the segregated South, the four white musicians featured in the Million Dollar Quartet were greatly influenced and taught by Black musicians that they encountered. Black radio stations like the WDIA out of Memphis hired musicians like B.B. King and Rufus Thomas, playing their music to an audience that reached through the Mississippi Delta to the Gulf Coast. Music genres like blues, gospel, and emerging R&B began wafting over the airwaves, greatly influencing the

blend of southern music that created Perkins, Presley, Lewis, and Cash's rock 'n' roll sounds.

Urban blues performers like Muddy Waters and Bo Diddley worked their way into the early rock 'n' roll sounds of the artists of Million Dollar Quartet. "Godmother of rock 'n' roll" Sister Rosetta Tharpe was a gospel singer and one of the first electric guitarists whose mix of spiritual lyrics and electric guitar inspired Elvis Presley and Johnny Cash. Fats Domino's unique piano playing style taught Jerry Lee Lewis and Presley how to swing. Although they were ascending at the same time, Presley and Lewis incorporated Little Richard's whooping vocals and driving piano into their recordings and performances. Chuck Berry's mix of blues and country music so impressed Carl Perkins, that Berry's "Brown Eyed Handsome Man" was recorded in the impromptu session on December 4, 1956. The influence of many Black artists on early rock 'n' roll was profound and continues to be heard today.

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION AT A SPECIAL
AFTERWORDS ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 1 WITH

BEAU DIXON, AWARD-WINNING ACTOR, MUSICIAN, PLAYWRIGHT, MUSIC DIRECTOR, AND SOUND DESIGNER
NORMA COATES, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DON WRIGHT FACULTY OF MUSIC, AND THE FACULTY OF INFORMATION AND MEDIA STUDIES, WESTERN UNIVERSITY



PICTURED: ARTHUR "BIG BOY" CRUDRUP, FATS DOMINO, CHUCK BERRY, AND SISTER ROSETTA THARPE.

Pre-Show Discussion Questions

1. Do you know of any artists that are pushing boundaries (experimenting with new technology, blending different genres, etc.)? Does their music transcend generations (multiple age groups love it/ know of them)?
2. What is the difference between “covering” a song and “stealing” a song?
3. Do social, economic, and racial issues affect the music industry? Why or why not?

Pre-Show Classroom Activities

1. Where did Rock ‘n’ Roll originate from? In small groups, decide what genre you will research: gospel, rhythm & blues, swing, boogie-woogie, urban blues, country & western, rockabilly, or rock ‘n’ roll. Then consider the following questions:
 - What instruments were used in this genre?
 - What year was this genre popular? What year did this genre start/finish?
 - What was this type of music used for? What were some of the songs associated with this genre?
 - Who were the pioneers (notable artists) of this genre?
 - What major events or inventions happened during the time period?

Present the information you have gathered as an infographic or collage. Once all the research projects are finished, create a large Rock ‘n’ Roll timeline as a class (using each other’s infographics/collages). Resource suggestion: [CLICK HERE](#).

Post-Show Discussion Questions

1. In a [video interview](#) about Million Dollar Quartet, the Director Julie Tomaino comments that “the musicians were more than just their music, their lives affected the songs they were singing”. As a class, discuss what she meant by this statement.
2. Why do you think Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins were called the Million Dollar Quartet? Do you think this was a historic moment in music history? Why or why not? For background information: [CLICK HERE](#).
3. What happened to Rock ‘n’ Roll music? For background information: [CLICK HERE](#). Are there any artists today that have a Rock ‘n’ Roll sound?

Post-Show Classroom Activities

1. Rock ‘n’ Roll was influenced by a variety of different genres and artists. Think about the types of artists and genres that you like listening to. Do you know how those genres were created or what influenced those artists?

“When we see a student wearing headphones, we don’t tell her to put them away, we ask what she’s listening to and then Trace It Back” – Stevie Van Zandt

From this [TEACH ROCK resource](#), students will select an artist, read the associated selection, and then show what they know through a variety of arts-integrated projects: infographic, illustrated timeline, comic strip, video biography, family tree, or a letter.