APR 19-MAY 11 2025



ву Rajiv Joseph DIRECTED BY Monteze Freeland

A CO-PRODUCTION WITH CLEVELAND PLAY HOUSE



HOSTED BY DIXIE SHERWOOD

CABARET STARS JULIANNE AVOLIO MARIA BECOATES-BEY SHANE MCLAUGHLIN JERREME RODRIGUEZ

MUSIC DIRECTOR CAMMILEROLLA Lea DeLaria is an accomplished Jazz performer who has performed in concert venues all over the world. She is best known as 'Big Boo' from Orange is the New Black (3 SAG Awards) and can currently be seen in the indie feature film Potato Dreams of America, and in the Indigo Girls jukebox feature film, Glitter & Doom. @realleadelaria www.leadelaria.com

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FROM THE CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

At its core, Rajiv Joseph's *King James* is a tale of loyalty. At times, it is an admonishment of bandwagon fandom, calling to the court those who falter in their devotion. To be a fan of the Cleveland Cavaliers is to be both an optimist and a realist. Their record has carried more heartbreak than adulation. After spending time in the "216," mounting the first iteration of this co-production at Cleveland Play House, I have learned that Cleveland rallies behind its teams with gusto and authenticity. No matter the outcome, there is always next year.

I believe resilience is the heartbeat of success. And you, our treasured audience, have shown us time and time again that you trust our artistic instincts and community values. Your loyalty has been our lifeline, and my biggest wish is that you help secure another 50 years for this cultural landmark by subscribing to next season, attending our 50th Anniversary BASH fundraiser and continuing to champion City Theatre in your inner circles. Let it be known far and wide that our big red doors are open to all!

On a personal note: It is not lost on me that LeBron's decision to leave home to play for another team mirrors this moment in my life. City Theatre has been my artistic home for 18 years. Yet, this is my last production serving as co-artistic director before assuming the role of artistic director of Pittsburgh's Alumni Theater Company. At age 20, I first walked through City Theatre's doors as a patron. I was instantly enamored with this homey space that blissfully ignited my imagination through its innovation and craft. I still have that feeling when the lights dim before every production. My motto is, "There is no theater magic; there are simply hard-working people working their asses off." The team at City Theatre is topnotch in every department and gives their all to the finished product and equally to understanding the lessons of the process. I will miss being surrounded by their brilliant minds and sharp craftsmanship. This team works hard and consistently goes above and beyond to curate memorable experiences. The reward of being an agent of change is worth the sacrifice.

I thank our friends of City Theatre for your support as I worked alongside my colleagues to uphold the legacy of curating bold and challenging work. I understand how blessed I am to have this singular journey, meeting hundreds of virtuosic artists along the way. The future of City Theatre is bright, in capable hands, and will stand tall as a pioneer of thoughtprovoking entertainment in our region and far beyond.

So, my last request is that you never doubt or impede the transformative power of storytelling supported by the tenets of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility. This uplifts us all.

With Love

Monteze Freeland





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In 2018, by resolution of the board of the directors, City Theatre created an Honorary Board to recognize the extraordinary service of previous volunteers and leaders who have been instrumental to the organization's continued growth and success.

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CLARE DROBOT and MONTEZE FREELAND **Co-Artistic Directors**

JAMES McNEEL Managing Director MICHAEL BARAKIVA Artistic Director

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PRESENT **KING JAMES** BY

RAJIV JOSEPH DIRECTED BY **MONTEZE FREELAND**

CAST

Robert Hunter

Michael Patrick Trimm*

Tony Ferrieri** Scenic Design

Jeffrey Van Curtis Costume Design

Jakvung C. Seo

Howard Patterson Sound Design

Tucker Topel Assistant Scenic Design

Jasmine A. Golphin **Projection Design**

Lighting Design

Jeffrey Ullom Dramaturg

Taylor K. Meszaros* Stage Manager

April 19 through May 11, 2025 Approx. 2 hours with an intermission

* Members of Actors' Equity Association ** Member of United Scenic Artists

King James was co-commissioned by Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Anna D. Shapiro, Artistic Director, David Schmitz, Executive Director, and Center Theatre Group, Michael Ritchie, Artistic, Douglas C Baker, Producing Director, and received its world premiere in 2022 in co-productions at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago and Center Theatre Group/Mark Taper Forum, Los Angeles

A CO-PRODUCTION WITH CLEVELAND PLAY HOUSE

CHARACTERS



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CAST

Shawn Matt

Robert Hunter

Michael Patrick Trimm

Setting: Cleveland Heights, Ohio 2004, 2010, 2014, 2016.



RAJIV JOSEPH (Playwright)'s play Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo was a 2010 Pulitzer Prize finalist for Drama and also awarded a grant for Outstanding New American Play by the National Endowment for the Arts. He has twice won the Obie Award for Best New American Play, first in 2016 with Guards at the Taj (also a 2016 Lortel Winner for Best Play) and then in 2018 with Describe the Night. Other plays include King James, Letters of Suresh, Archduke, Gruesome Playground Injuries, Animals Out of Paper, The Lake Effect, The North Pool and Mr. Wolf. Joseph has been awarded artistic grants from the Whiting Foundation, United States Artists and the Harold & Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust. He served for three years in the Peace Corps in Senegal.



MONTEZE FREELAND (Director and Co-Artistic Director), a

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette "Performer of the Year" (2017), has been employed by City Theatre in multiple positions, including actor, teaching artist, and box office associate. In 2020, he joined the full-time staff as Associate Producer and was selected as a Producer in Residence by the National New Play Network. A Baltimore native, his roots in theater began at the Arena Players before moving to Pittsburgh in 2006 to attend Point Park University ('09). He has served as Producing Artistic Associate for Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company and Director of Education for Quantum Theatre Company.



LEBRON JAMES

Prepared by Dramaturg Richard Ullom

2004: LeBron wins Rookie of the Year

History: George W. Bush wins re-election over John Kerry Massachusetts legalizes same-sex marriage Barack Obama makes a name for himself at the Democratic National Convention NASA rover lands on Mars

Pop Culture:Janet Jackson's "wardrobe malfunction" at the Super BowlFacebook and Gmail appear for the first timeMaroon 5 and Usher top the charts

Shrek 2 was the top-grossing film and *Avenue Q* wins the Tony for Best Musical

Martha Stewart goes to prison

2010: LeBron makes "The Decision"

History:BP oil disaster spills 170 million gallons into the Gulf of Mexico
The Affordable Care Act signed into law
US forces end their combat role in Iraq
Thirty-three miners rescued after being trapped underground
for 69 daysPop Culture:Betty White hosts Saturday Night Line
Sherlock with Benedict Cumberbatch premieres
Instagram launches and Apple introduces the iPad
Toy Story 3 dominates cinemas and

AND HISTORY

2014: LeBron declares "I'm Back"

History:	Republican John Kasick re-elected Ohio governor
	Protests erupt after the police shoot and kill Michael Brown, a Black teenager in Ferguson, Missouri
	Malaysian airliner MH370 disappears from radar without a n explanation
	LA Clippers owner Donald Sterling forced to sell team after making racist remarks
Pop Culture:	Jay Leno steps down as host of <i>The Tonight Show</i>
	The most popular songs of the year are "Happy" and "Shake It Off
	A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder wins Best Musical
	<i>12 Years a Slave</i> wins Best Picture at the Oscars hosted by Ellen DeGeneres
2016: L	eBron and the Cavaliers win it all
History:	Donald Trump wins the Presidential election
	Obama declares a state of emergency for Flint, Michigan's water system
	Forty-nine people are killed in the Pulse nightclub shooting attack in Orlando
1	Thanks to a rainstorm, Chicago beats Cleveland in Game 7 of the World Series
Pop Culture:	Prince, David Bowie, Alan Rickman, George Michael, Muhammad Ali, Gene Wilder, and Carrie Fisher all pass away
	Hamilton dominates the Tony Awards
	Marvel and DC films dominate cinemas
	Pokémon Go takes over the phones of many youths and AirPods debut

Ke\$ha's "Tik Tok" is the #1 of the year





WHO'S WHO



ROBERT HUNTER (Shawn) is an accomplished actor and community leader celebrated for his compelling performances in theater, film, and television. His notable stage credits include standout roles such as Jonas Nightingale in *Leap of Faith* at Karamu House, where critics described him as "dynamic and electrifying"; and Bruce in *Jelly Belly* at Ensemble Theatre, a portrayal praised by Cleveland Scene as "masterful" and "absolutely hypnotic." On screen, he has appeared in *The Land* (directed by Stephen Caple Jr.) and *Criminal Activities* (starring John Travolta). A recipient of the American Black Film Festivals Best Actor Award at just 20 years old, Robert also directs his passion toward youth advocacy as the CEO

and founder of 5 Pillars Inc., empowering underserved communities through mentorship and leadership programs. Standing at 6 feet with a commanding presence and emotional depth, Robert continues to captivate audiences and inspire change through his work.



MICHAEL PATRICK TRIMM (Matt) is thrilled to be returning to City Theatre after previously appearing in *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley.* Other Select Theater credits include: Public Theater (*Julius Caesar*) Pittsburgh Public Theater (*A Few Good Men, American Son, Dial M for Murder, The Merchant of Venice*), PICT (*As You Like It, A Christmas Carol*), Kitchen Theatre (*Hand to God*), Hangar Theatre (*Little Women*), Oldcastle Theater (*Sheepdog*), Ithaca Shakespeare Company (*Henry V, A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Kinetic Theater (*The Illustrious Invalid*), W.H.A.T. (*Raging Skillet*), and 4615 Theater (*Dracula*). Michael is an alumnus of Ithaca College (BFA Acting). michaelpatricktrimm.com This is for Thomas Trimm.

TONY FERRIERI (Scenic Designer) *King James* marks Tony's 211th production with City Theatre. Awards and milestones include The Carol R. Brown Creative Achievement Award for Established Artist, New Works Festival Lifetime Achievement Award, "Designer of the Year" by *Pittsburgh City Paper* and *Post Gazette*, The Frankel Award, Fred Kelly Award for Outstanding Achievement, Harry Schwalb Excellence in the Arts Award, Features in *Live Design* and *Stage Directions* magazines, 43 years as Resident Scenic Designer at City Theatre, and over 580 scenic designs. Recent designs include; *Art of Wise* and *The Bluegrass Mile* for Pittsburgh Playwrights Theater, *Crocodile Fever* and *The Skeleton Crew* for barebones productions, *The Coffin Maker* for Pittsburgh Public Theater, *Southside Stories Revisited* and *Native Gardens* for City Theatre, *Hamlet* for Quantum Theatre, *Anything Goes* for Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, *Smart Blonde* for 59E59 Theatre in New York, *Feeding the Dragon* for Hartford Stage and Primary Stages, *Carousel* for Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center, *The Book of Mormon* for Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera Cabaret, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* for Pittsburgh Playhouse Conservatory. tferrieri@aol.com.

JASMINE A. GOLPHIN (Projection Designer) is a visual artist and associate artistic director at Maelstrom Collaborative Arts, an interdisciplinary arts venue. Her artistry explores themes of existentialism, surrealism, and emotional awareness through storytelling, photography, film, live performance, virtual reality, and projection design - all typically in relationship to societal marginalization. In 2022, Jasmine became the first apprentice in Dobama Theatre's FOCUS Program, which led to projection-designing *Cinderella* at Theater Under the Stars, *Matilda Jr* at the Brooklyn Music School, and *Thurgood* and *King James* at Cleveland Play House. Her essay, "Black Woman [Unintentionally] in Tech" was supported by NEW INC and Meta Open Art. Her VR Experience "FACEBOOKLAND" was supported by SPACES, the Satellite Fund through The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts Regional Regranting Program. Her latest art installation, "Welcome to the Panopticon!" was supported by Cleveland Camera Rental's 2024 Rental Credit Grant and The Foundation for Contemporary Arts' Emergency Grant.









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WHO'S WHO

HOWARD PATTERSON (Sound Design) is a Pittsburgh-based sound designer, audio engineer, and educator. Howard is the Assistant Teaching Professor of Sound Design at University of Pittsburgh. He has worked on many projects in and around Pittsburgh and is passionate about sonic storytelling. Recent designs have been heard at City Theatre Company, TheatreSquared, Quantum Theatre, University of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Playhouse. Howard received his BFA from Point Park University.

JAKYUNG C. SEO (Lighting Design) is a distinguished lighting designer with a portfolio of over 100 productions. Her work has illuminated stages at renowned theatres such as Cleveland Play House, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and Congo Square Theatre in Chicago, as well as Dobama Theatre and Cleveland Public Theatre in Cleveland. She has also contributed to Contemporary American Theatre Company (CATCO) in Columbus, HEAR Theater in New York, and Lodestone Theatre in Los Angeles. Seo currently serves as the Artistic Director of the Global Women Performing Arts Festival (GWPAF), an initiative focused on elevating the voices of female artists. Under her leadership, GWPAF has hosted virtual events, including a notable collaboration with the Martha Graham Dance Company. She is currently a Professor of Lighting Design and Coordinator of the BFA and MFA Design, Technology, and Production programs at Kent State University.

JEFFREY VAN CURTIS (Costume Designer) is Cleveland Play Houses costume shop supervisor. Last season he designed the CWRU/CPH production, Middletown. CPH design credits include *A Carol for Cleveland, My Name is Asher Lev, Bill W. and Dr. Bob, Doubt, I Am My Own Wife, Rounding Third, Proof, Dinner with Friends*, and *Art.* In addition to Middletown, Curtis CWRU/CPH design credits include *Fifth of July, She Stoops to Conquer, A Philadelphia Story, Twelfth Night, The Winter's Tale, An Orchard,* and others; along with several CPH Theatre for Children productions. Other design credits include *Singin' on the Ohio* and *The Goblins Will Git You* at The Lantern Theatre, productions at Coconut Grove Playhouse and Studio Arena Theatre, and work on the film Kansas City. He has also created wigs for a number of CPH productions. He holds his Master of Fine Arts, Costume Design and Technology from University of Missouri– Kansas City. Jeffrey thanks CPH's costume staff for their creativity, enthusiasm and support.

CLEVELAND PLAY HOUSE, founded in 1915 and recipient of the 2015 Regional Theatre Tony Award, is Ameica's first professional regional theatre. Throughout its rich history, CPH has remained dedicated to its mission to inspire, stimulate, and entertain diverse audiences across Northeast Ohio by producing plays and theatre education programs of the highest professional standards. CPH has produced more than 100 world and/or American premieres, and over its long history more than 12 million people have attended over 1,600 productions. Today, Cleveland Play House celebrates the beginning of its second century of service while performing in three state-of-the-art venues at Playhouse Square in downtown Cleveland.



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WHO'S WHO



TAYLOR K. MESZAROS (Stage Manager) is delighted to be back at CTC! She is based in Pittsburgh, spending her time as an AEA Stage Manager and as a Standardized Patient for the University of Pittsburgh Medical School. Favorite credits include *White Christmas, The Skin of Our Teeth, Hair!, A Christmas Carol* (Berkshire Theatre Group), *Frida, Young Americans, Two Trains Running, Schoolgirls; Or, the African Mean Girls Play* (Pittsburgh Public Theatre), *What the Constitution Means to Me, Native Gardens, Fat Ham, Somewhere Over the Border, Paradise Blue, Downstairs, Cambodian Rock Band, The Burdens, Where Did We Sit On the Bus?, Pipeline, The Absolute Brightness..., Wild With Happy, Feeding the Dragon, Some Brighter Distance, Oblivion, Smart Blonde,*

South Side Stories, and Sam Bendrix at the Bon Soir (City Theatre Company). Love to friends and family for their unwavering support.



JAMES MCNEEL (Managing Director) (he/him) has been managing director at City Theatre for 10 years, having joined the organization in 2015 and making him the longest-serving managing leader in the organizations 50-year history. He previously served in the same position for four seasons at the Contemporary American Theater Festival in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. James has also worked as a literature specialist with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA); director of development and marketing at Off-Broadway's Cherry Lane Theatre in Greenwich Village; and as general manager and development consultant for the Center for Creative Resources, an arts management firm in

New York City. He holds a B.A. degree from Shepherd University and studied arts management in the Master of Arts program at American University. He currently serves on the board and multiple committees for the League of Resident Theaters (LORT); leads a monthly regional convening of arts and culture organizational leaders, hosted by City Theatre; is a community advisor for newly-constituted Regional Capacity Building Initiative; and continues to volunteer and advocate with industry entities such as the National New Play Network (NNPN), Theatre Communications Group (TCG), Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, and the Professional Non-Profit Theater Coalition. Originally from West Virginia, James lives in Lawrenceville with Shannon and Lottie.



CLARE DROBOT (Co-Artistic Director) is proud to serve as City Theatre's Co-Artistic Director alongside Monteze Freeland. She joined the staff at the theater in 2015 serving as the Director of New Play Development and later as Associate Artistic Director. A dramaturg, playwright, and producer Clare has worked in various capacities at Premiere Stages at Kean University, Laura Stanczyk Casting, Williamstown Theatre Festival, The McCarter Theatre, The BE Company, Play Penn, and New Dramatists. Her work as a writer has been seen in Ars Novas ANT FEST and the New Hazlett Theatres CSA Series among others. She serves on the boards of the National New Play Network and Brew House

Association and is a member of the Holocaust Center of Pittsburghs Generations Group, a Global Fellow through the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh, and a graduate of Leadership Pittsburgh (LP XXXVIII). BA/ BFA Carnegie Mellon University, member of LMDA.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SPECIAL THANKS

Michael Barakiva, Rachel Fink, Nathan Henry, Derek Green, Diana Angell, and the entire Cleveland Play House staff.

Rajiv Joseph

50th Anniversary Fun Fact

City Theatre's first home was at the Allegheny Community Theatre, which is now known as the New Hazlett Theater



a City Theatre receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.



The Allegheny Regional Asset District, a county agency created to support and finance regional assets, including libraries, parks, cultural groups, sports, and civic facilities, and to distribute tax relief to the 128 municipalities of Allegheny County.



Actors marked with * and the Stage Manager in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States



The scenic, costume, lighting, and sound designers in LORT Theatres are represented by the United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.



The Director is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, Inc., an independent national labor union.

City Theatre is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre. City Theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



NNPN National New Play Network Core Member









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City Theatre's Vision, Mission, Core Values

Mission:

To provide an artistic home for the development and production of contemporary plays that engage and challenge a diverse audience.

Vision:

To be the finest mid-sized theater in America.

Core Values: Community | Collaboration | Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility | Creativity





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Youth Enrichment Services (YES) formed in 1994 to create hope out of hopelessness, paint a bright future out of uncertainty and give young people from inner-city and urban communities a portrait of themselves as successful, empowered, and confident leaders. With YES' mentorship, our young people go on to become leaders among their peers, and within their schools, homes, and communities.

PUMP's mission is to make Pittsburgh the most dynamic and diverse place by engaging, educating, and mobilizing all young people to create change in our community. Each year, we engage with over 20,000 neighbors through our advocacy, civic, social, and recreational programming. Our largest program is the Pittsburgh Sports League in which Pittsburghers compete in mixed gender sports leagues and customized competitions throughout the year.

Young Black Motivated Kings and Queens provides youth and families in the Greater Allegheny County area with a safe space where youth can be creative and expressive as they navigate their role in their community and in the world.

KING IAMES

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DISCOUNTED & RUSH TICKETS

Persons under 30 years of age may reserve \$20 advance tickets by calling the Box Office. Seniors age 62 and older may take advantage of rush tickets, \$25 each, available only on the day of the performance. All discounted/rush tickets are subject to availability.

TICKET VALUES

Tickets prices vary by date and demand. In addition, pay-what-you-want performances are offered for each production. Call the box office for dates.

PARKING

City Theatre provides safe, convenient parking for \$10 via lot access at 1317 Bingham St, across from the theatre entrance. Parking is subject to availability. On-street parking meters are monitored until midnight on Friday and Saturday. Visit www.pittsburghparking.com for more information.

LATE SEATING POLICY

Our theatres are very intimate. Out of respect for both the actors and audience, late arrivals will be seated only at the discretion of house management. Consider arriving early to enjoy a beverage in the Gordon Lounge or to visit South Side's many eclectic shops and restaurants.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Please turn off all electronic devices. Ringing or vibrating cell phones, pagers, and watches disrupt the performance and interfere with the theatre's sound equipment. **No photography or video recording permitted during the performance.**

> City Theatre is committed to providing an environment that is inclusive and welcoming to all patrons. Please identify any special seating needs to our Box Office staff when reserving your tickets in advance by calling 412.431.CITY (2489).



Wheelchair accessible seating is available in both the Mainstage and Lillie Studio Theatres.



Selected performances of each production feature open captioning, audio description, and pre-show introductory workshops for those who are hearing impaired, blind, or have low vision. In addition, select productions will include an American Sign Language Interpreted performance. Performance dates are available online or by contacting the Box Office.



Assistive listening devices are available. Please see the House Manager for details.



Programs are available in both Braille and large print. Please see the House Manager for details.







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Located one block from the City Theatre on 12th & Carson