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**The Repertory Theater of St. Louis Presents
Twisted Melodies
October 4 - 22, 2023 at COCA**

Written and Performed by St. Louis Native Kelvin Roston, Jr.

ST. LOUIS, MO (September 12, 2023) - **The Repertory Theater of St. Louis** (The Rep) the leading regional performing arts theatre in the Midwest, presents ***Twisted Melodies***, based on the life of St. Louis soul music icon **Donny Hathaway**. Written and performed by St. Louis native **Kelvin Roston, Jr.** and directed by The Rep's Associate Artistic Director **Reggie D. White**, the production runs from October 4 - 22, 2023, with opening night set for Friday, October 6 at the Catherine B. Berges Theatre at COCA.

Twisted Melodies is a riveting play about the brilliant singer and composer Donny Hathaway.. Torn between the muses that inspire him and the mental illness that torments him, Hathaway takes us on a journey through his musical history as he evaluates his life in a gripping one-man show by St. Louis native Kelvin Roston, Jr.

"I am thrilled to share this iconic and thoroughly St. Louis story with our community," said Associate Artistic Director **Reggie D. White**. "Part of The Rep's rich legacy is a deep commitment to fostering American Voices and what better way to do that by showcasing one of our own, Kelvin Roston, Jr. as he illuminates the rich and unsung story of Donny Hathaway."

Playwright, actor and native to St. Louis, **Kelvin Roston, Jr.** was drawn to Hathaway's story as a way to make talking about mental illness easier. Roston, a graduate of Cardinal Ritter High School, started writing ***Twisted Melodies*** while interning at The Black Rep, fostering his creative chops. Since then Roston has gone on to perform all over the world and recently won the Jeff Award for Best Actor for his performance of ***King Hedley II*** at The Court Theater in Chicago.

Donny Hathaway was a singer, pianist, producer, composer and one of R&B's greatest talents. Born in 1945, Hathaway was raised in the Carr Square Housing Projects of St. Louis by his grandmother Martha Pitts, a professional gospel singer. He attended Vashton High School before going onto Howard University majoring in music theory where his arrangements for The

Staple Singers, Curtis Mayfield and Aretha Franklin earned him a job at Curtom Records in 1969 where he recorded his first single, "I Thank You, Baby," a duet with June Conquest. Best known for classics "This Christmas," "A Song For You," "The Ghetto, Pt 1," and "He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother" solidified him as a musical legacy for generations to come. In 1972 he collaborated with Roberta Flack on a series of duets including chart topper "Where Is The Love" which earned the pair the Grammy Award for Best Pop Performance Duo in 1973.

"The story of soul music legend Donny Hathaway is a complicated one to tell, especially when you factor in his paranoid schizophrenia diagnoses which would contribute to his tragic passing." said Hathaway's daughter **Donnita Hathaway**. "I'm am in awe of how much care and delicacy the brilliant Kelvin Roston takes in his role as my father while staying true to highlighting mental health issues during this fateful night and balancing the scales by taking us down memory lane by infusing the classic musical catalog that Donny Hathaway left us. I am thrilled that *Twisted Melodies* is coming to The Rep, a place that both Kelvin Roston and the late Donny Hathaway could call home."

Twisted Melodies is directed by The Rep's Associate Artistic Director **Reggie D. White** and includes scenic design by **Tim Mackabee** (*Murder On The Orient Express*, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), costume design by **Dede Ayite** (*The Lehman Trilogy*, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), lighting design by **Xavier Pierce** (*Confederates*, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), sound design by **G Clausen** (*Queen of the Night*, Victory Gardens Theater) and projection design by **Mike Tutaj** (*Gem of the Ocean*, *The Goodman Theatre*). The production stage manager is **Ben Shipley**.

Twisted Melodies received its World Premiere at Congo Square Theatre in Chicago and was subsequently produced in a co-production between Congo Square and Baltimore Center Stage in 2015.

The Rep's production of *Twisted Melodies* is sponsored in part by **Susan and Peter Tuteur**.

Purchase tickets to *Twisted Melodies* online at Repstl.org, by phone at 314-968-4925, or The Rep Box Office will also be available for in-person support at the Loretto-Hilton Center(130 Edgar Rd, Webster Groves), Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m, and 2 hours before curtain.

For more information, please visit repstl.org.

FACT SHEET

Twisted Melodies

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Directed by Reggie D. White

October 4 -22, 2023 at Catherine B. Berges Theatre at COCA (6880 Washington Avenue)

TICKET INFORMATION:

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Rush Tickets: Available for students, seniors, educators, and theatre professionals by calling the Box Office at 314-968-4925, 1 - 2 hours prior to curtain time.

Group Sales: Discounted tickets available for parties of 10+. Call 314-968-4925 or email mdorn@repstl.org.

ACCESS SERVICES:

Audio-Described Performance: Thursday, October 19 at 7pm – the show will be described for patrons who are blind or have low vision.

ASL Performance: Saturday, October 21 at 1pm - the show will be signed for the deaf or hard of hearing.

Open-Captioned Performance: Sunday, October 22 at 2pm - an electronic text ticker displays words being spoke or sung onstage

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Post Show Discussions - Saturday, October 14 at 4pm and Wednesday, October 18 at 2pm.

MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA:

Press night for critics is Friday, October 6 at 7pm. Please [RSVP HERE](#) for press night or other available performances.

Production photos are available for download at <https://www.repstl.org/about/press>.

ABOUT THE REPERTORY THEATRE OF ST. LOUIS

The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis (The Rep) is the region's premiere theatre for compelling, award-winning theatrical experiences that entertain, engage, and illuminate audiences' shared humanity. Founded in 1966, for more than five decades The Rep has sustained and built upon its commitment to artistic excellence by creating, developing, and curating adventurous new works and beloved classics from the most exciting emerging and established American voices. The Rep builds bridges within the St. Louis community and beyond by offering productions that allow audiences to see themselves and the stories that matter to them represented on stage, through the organization's robust community engagement programs, and across its educational initiatives.

The Rep welcomes audiences with inspiring and expansive productions at several inviting stages across St. Louis including the Virginia Jackson Browning Theatre at the Loretto-Hilton

Center for the Performing Arts and the Catherine B. Berges Theatre at COCA. A thought leader in the national theatre landscape, The Rep is a dedicated partner with arts organizations in St. Louis and across the country, expanding audiences' appreciation and understanding of the world through theatre. For more information, please visit repstl.org and follow [@repstl](https://twitter.com/repstl).

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