

RING OF FIRE



★ **THE MUSIC OF** ★

**JOHNNY
CASH**

*Created by Richard Maltby, Jr.
Conceived by William Meade
Orchestrations by Steven Bishop and Jeff Lisenby*

**RING OF FIRE:
THE MUSIC OF JOHNNY CASH**
PLAY GUIDE

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Milwaukee Repertory Theater presents

RING OF FIRE
★ THE MUSIC OF ★
JOHNNY CASH

Created and Directed by Richard Maltby, Jr.
Conceived by William Meade
Orchestrations by Steven Bishop and Jeff Lisenby

March 1- May 5, 2013
Stackner Cabaret



MARK'S TAKE:

"Prior to coming to America, I'd never paid much attention to country music. But it's now become a style that I absolutely love. Johnny Cash is so influential to so many musicians across so many genres, and *Ring of Fire* treats us to all of those legendary, great songs, while giving us a snapshot into his life. It's a celebration of his soul-stirring music—really good stuff!"

-Mark Clements, Artistic Director



Tickets: 414-224-9490
www.MilwaukeeRep.com

Mark Clements
Artistic Director

Milwaukee Repertory Theater
108 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI • 53202

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SYNOPSIS



Eddie Clendenen as Johnny Cash.

Ring of Fire is a jukebox musical that celebrates the lives and stories Johnny Cash sang about in his music. A cast of four men and one woman tell his remarkable life story through some of the greatest songs of one of America's most brilliant singer/songwriters, Johnny Cash. The story travels from Cash growing up on a farm, to the Grand Ole Opry, to meeting June Carter and falling into a "Ring of Fire." A mosaic of American experience featuring "Five Feet High and Rising," "Daddy Sang Bass," "Ring of Fire," "I Walk the Line," and "I've Been Everywhere," the show features the music of Johnny Cash at his highs and lows.

MUSICAL NUMBERS:

ACT 1

Let the Train Blow the Whistle
Country Boy
Straight A's In Love
Highway Underscore
While I've Got It On My Mind
Five Feet High
Sweet Bye and Bye
Daddy Sang Bass
Flesh and Blood
I Was There When it Happened
Cry Cry Cry
Big River
I Still Miss Someone
Get Rhythm
Egg Suckin' Dog
Oh Come Angel Band
Flushed From The Bathroom Of Your Heart
If I Were A Carpenter
Ring of Fire
Jackson

ACT 2

I've Been Everywhere
Sunday Morning Coming Down
All Over Again
Going to Memphis
Delia's Gone
Folsom Prison Blues
Man In Black
I Walk The Line
Far Side Banks Of Jordon
Why Me Lord
Hey Porter
A Boy Named Sue



Trenna Barnes and Jason Edwards with David Miles Keenan, Mark W. Winchester and Eddie Clendenen in the background.



Trenna Barnes and Eddie Clendenen with Mark W. Winchester, David Miles Keenan and Jason Edwards in the background.



Mark W. Winchester.

Production Photos by Michael Brosilow

JOHNNY CASH



Johnny Cash.

Johnny Cash was born February 26th, 1932 in Kingsland, Arkansas, the fourth of seven children. At age three, Cash's father moved the family to Dyess Colony in northeast Arkansas, where they farmed twenty acres of cotton and other seasonal crops.

Cash grew up with music as an integral part of his household, and he began to write songs and play guitar at age twelve. His music saw many influences from hymns, his mother's folk songs, and work songs from nearby railroad yards. By the time Cash entered high school, he performed frequently on radio station KLCN in Blythville, Arkansas. After his graduation from high school in 1950, Cash moved to Detroit before enlisting in the U.S. Air Force.

He joined the Air Force Security Service in

Landsberg, Germany intercepting and translating Soviet morse code transmissions. Here Cash organized his first band, the Landsberg Barbarians. After discharge from the Air Force in 1954, Cash married Vivian Liberto, whom he met during basic training. The same year he auditioned for Sam Phillips' Sun Records and with a couple of mechanics, Marshall Grant and Luther Perkins, formed a trio known as Johnny Cash and the Tennessee Two. The three friends recorded hit songs such as "Cry, Cry, Cry," "Folsom Prison Blues," and "I Walk the Line." "I Walk the Line" shot to the Billboards number one position and remained on the record charts for 43 weeks, ultimately selling over two million copies.

Throughout the late the 1950s and into the 1960s, Cash continued to produce hit records. His songs "Don't Take Your Guns to Town," "I Got Stripes," "Understand Your Man," and "The Ballad of Ira Hayes" all hit near the top of the record charts. Cash also produced arguably his most popular song, "Ring of Fire," at this time; co-written by June Carter.

Some of Johnny Cash's Hit Songs

"Cry, Cry, Cry"

"Folsom Prison Blues"

"I Walk the Line"

"Don't Take Your Guns to Town"

"I Got Stripes"

"Understand Your Man"

"The Ballad of Ira Hayes"

"Ring of Fire"

"Solitary Man"

"Jackson"

"Long-Legged Guitar Pickin' Man"

"It Ain't Me, Babe"

TIMELINE

1932

Johnny Cash born in Kingsland, Arkansas to Ray Cash and Carrie Cloverlee.

1954

Johnny Cash marry Liberto.

1955

Johnny Cash and Vivian Liberto record "Cry, Cry, Cry."

1956

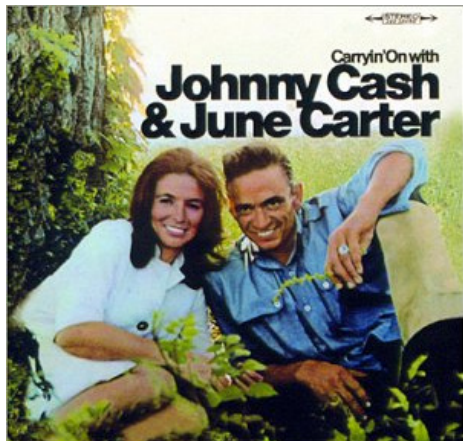
Cash releases his first recordings with the Tennessee Two: "Hey Porter" and "I Walk the Line."

1963

Cash releases the hit single "Ring of Fire."

1965

Police arrest Cash in El Paso, Texas for possession of amphetamines in his guitar case.

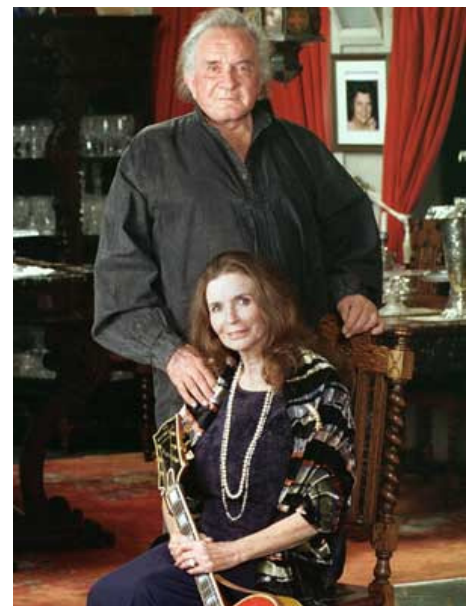


Cash and Carter's First Album Together.

Despite Cash's success on the charts, he struggled in his personal life. Cash moved to California in 1958, where he extensively abused drugs and alcohol. In 1965, custom officials arrested Cash for trying to smuggle amphetamines in his guitar case across the Mexican border. Following this period of Cash's substance abuse, touring, and womanizing, Vivian Liberto divorced Cash in 1967.

Cash moved to Nashville in 1967, and worked with June Carter, who helped Cash overcome his drug addiction. The two went on to marry in 1968. Cash and Carter produced top charting duets, including "Jackson," "Long-Legged Guitar Pickin' Man," and "It Ain't Me, Babe." Although the effects of his drug and alcohol abuse remained a struggle throughout his career, Cash continued to produce hit records.

In 1980, at the age of 48, Johnny Cash became one of the youngest inductees into the Country Music Hall of Fame. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inducted Cash in 1992 as one of the few musicians recognized in both organizations. Despite health problems, Cash's successful career continued, as he earned a Grammy for best contemporary folk album (*American Recordings*) in 1994, another Grammy for best country album (*Unchained*) in 1997, and a Grammy for the best male country vocal performance for his cover of Neil Diamond's "Solitary Man" in 2000. In 2003, Cash earned three CMA awards, and his video for "Hurt" won an MTV award and a Grammy. He lost his wife June Carter Cash while she underwent heart valve replacement surgery in May 2003. Johnny Cash suffered complications from diabetes and passed away on September 12, 2003 in Nashville, Tennessee. Cash's rugged simplicity and honesty in his work extended the scope of country music and broadened audiences throughout his career.



Johnny Cash and June Carter in 2002.

1966	1968	1980	2002	2003
Vivian Liberto files for divorce.	Cash and June Carter marry.	Country Music Hall of Fame inducts Cash.	Cash, with the song "Give My Love to Rose," wins a Grammy for Best Country Male Vocal Performance.	Johnny Cash dies from complications with diabetes surgery at the age of 71.
				June Carter Cash dies from complications with heart surgery at the age of 73.
				The music video for "Hurt" wins a Grammy for Best Short Form Video.
				Johnny Cash dies due to complications with heart surgery at the age of 73.

THE MAN IN BLACK

Johnny Cash's iconic black clothes started as a practicality. When Cash began touring he did not have many changes of clothes so he wore a black t-shirt in order to look clean even if he had been wearing it for days. Over the years, Cash became known as the "man in black." In his song "Man in Black," he sings, "I wear the black for the poor and the beaten down, livin' in the hopeless, hungry side of town, I wear it for the prisoner who has long paid for his crime, but is there because he's a victim of the times." Yet in an interview with Larry King, Cash reflected on this song as not necessarily his reason for wearing black, but rather it simply coming down to his comfort level in the clothing. His eldest daughter saw her father's wardrobe as a more of a statement of who he is: "it reflected the sadness, the convulsions, just that mythic dark night of the soul that he went through so many times."



Cash in His Famous Attire.

PRISON REFORM



Cash and President Nixon talk about Prison Reform.

Johnny Cash took on prison reform as a political cause, bringing detention center conditions to the attention of politicians and the media. Cash famously performed free concerts at many prisons including Folsom Prison and San Quentin State Prison. He recorded on location and named two of his most popular albums after those institutions: *Folsom Prison Blues* and *San Quentin*. The albums served as spring boards for continuing reform discussions. In 1969, Cash performed at Cummins Prison in Arkansas and pledged five thousand dollars for the building of a chapel. He challenged the governor of Arkansas to match him, and the funding from Cash and the state helped build the chapel. Cash also met with President Richard Nixon to advocate for prison reform in 1972. He spoke to the Congressional Subcommittee on Prison Reform that same year.

RICHARD MALTBY, JR. *Creator and Director*



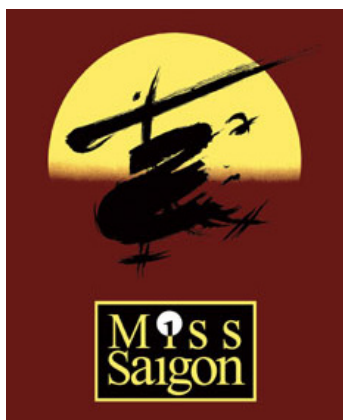
Richard Maltby Jr.

Richard Maltby, Jr. was born in Ripon, Wisconsin but spent most of his career on the East Coast. His musical revues *Ain't Misbehavin'* (1978) and *Fosse* (1999)

both won the Tony Award for Best Musical, the only two revues to ever win that award. As a lyricist, Maltby has frequently collaborated with David Shire, who he met at Yale while studying theater. Maltby and Shire's productions include *Baby*; *Big*; *Starting Here, Starting Now*; and *Closer Than Ever*. Maltby directed the Broadway production of *Baby* and was nominated for three Tony Awards including Best Direction of a Musical and Best Original Score.



Poster for *Baby*.



Album cover for *Miss Saigon*.

In 1986, Maltby served as the director and co-lyricist for the Broadway production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Song and Dance*. In 1991, he worked with Claude-Michel Schönberg and Alain Boublil as co-lyricist for *Miss Saigon* which was nominated

for eleven Tony Awards including Best Original Score. Other work includes lyrics for *Take Flight* and *The Pirate Queen*. Mr. Maltby created and directed the 2006 Broadway production of *Ring of Fire* at the Ethel Barrymore Theater.

AWARDS AND NOMINATIONS

- 1977 Grammy Award for Best Original Cast Recording - *Starting Here, Starting Now* (nomination)
- 1978 Tony Award for Best Direction of a Musical - *Ain't Misbehavin'*
- 1984 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lyrics - *Baby* (nomination)
- 1984 Tony Award for Best Direction of a Musical - *Baby* (nomination)
- 1984 Tony Award for Best Original Score - *Baby* (nomination)
- 1986 Tony Award for Best Direction of a Musical - *Song and Dance* (nomination)
- 1986 Tony Award for Best Musical - *Song and Dance* (nomination)
- 1986 Tony Award for Best Original Score - *Song and Dance* (nomination)
- 1986 Tony Award for Best Play - *Blood Knot* (nomination)
- 1990 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lyrics - *Closer Than Ever* (nomination)
- 1990 Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Score - *Closer Than Ever*
- 1991 Tony Award for Best Original Score - *Miss Saigon* (nomination)
- 1992 Tony Award for Best Original Score - *Nick & Nora* (nomination)
- 1996 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lyrics - *Big* (nomination)
- 1996 Tony Award for Best Original Score - *Big* (nomination)
- 1999 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Director of a Musical - *Fosse* (nomination)
- 1999 Tony Awards for Best Direction of a Musical - *Fosse* (nomination)
- 2001 Laurence Olivier Award - *Fosse*

VISITING THE REP

Milwaukee Repertory Theater's Patty and Jay Baker Theater Complex is located in the Milwaukee Center downtown at the corner of Wells and Water Streets. The building was formerly the home of the Electric Railway and Light Company.



Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Photo by Michael Brosilow.

The Ticket Office is visible on the left upon entering the Wells Street doors.

The Stackner Cabaret is located on the second level, and can be accessed via the escalator or elevator.

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