

— FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—

ARTS CLUB THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR **CHOIR BOY**

By Tarell Alvin McCraney
A co-production with Canadian Stage

January 25–February 25, 2024 (Media opening: January 31)

IN BRIEF The Arts Club Theatre Company’s production of *Choir Boy* plays **January 25–February 25** at the [Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage](#), 2750 Granville Street, Vancouver. Tickets from \$29. More info at artsclub.com

VANCOUVER, B.C. (January 4, 2024)—A hit coming-of-age play threaded with rapturous gospel hymns, *Choir Boy* plays **Jan 25–Feb 25** at the Arts Club Theatre Company’s **Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage**.

Pharus (**Andrew Broderick**) is a senior at the Charles R. Drew Prep School for Boys, and the proud leader of its legendary gospel choir. The prestigious school is committed to building “strong, ethical Black men,” but conforming to their traditions becomes harder as he learns to accept his identity as a young gay man. Weighing reconciliation and rebellion and featuring gorgeously sung a cappella hymns, *Choir Boy* is a love letter from **Tarell Alvin McCraney**, the Academy Award–winning screenwriter of *Moonlight*, to the healing power of music.

Director **Mike Payette** said, “Tarell Alvin McCraney’s writing invokes a unique harmony of poetry and contemporary prose through a powerful backdrop of community and coming-of-age. The journey of this brotherhood is celebrated through its complications and discoveries and reminds of the human need to belong and let our voice rise. The talents of the artists lift this story to spiritual heights, and the piece is one that will resonate in our hearts and souls long after the final bow.”

Ashlie Corcoran, the Arts Club’s Artistic Director, added, “Starring ‘Canadian Idol’ competitor Andrew Broderick, this coming-of-age piece explores contrasting representations of Black masculinity—something often not represented in popular media. I’m so excited for our audience to experience playwright Tarell Alvin McCraney’s finely wrought scenes and the piece’s gorgeously harmonized gospel music.”

Prior to the Arts Club’s co-production with Canadian Stage, *Choir Boy* was produced at the Royal Court, the Manhattan Theatre Club, the Geffen Playhouse in Los Angeles, and on Broadway at the Samuel J. Friedman Theatre. In 2019, it was nominated for four Tony Awards, including Best Play.

REVIEWS

“McCraney shows us how the arts can strengthen our sense of self and unite us, not just in spite of our differences but in celebration of them, if we only let them” —*The Globe and the Mail*

“The musicalization of this story as well as its focus on Black queer youth is what sets it apart” —*The Toronto Star*



“Registers with potency, examining its themes with a mixture of poignancy and humor...it soars” –*New York Post*

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Tarell Alvin McCraney is an acclaimed writer. His script *In Moonlight Black Boys Look Blue* is the basis for the Oscar-winning film *Moonlight*, directed by Barry Jenkins, for which McCraney and Jenkins won an Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay. He wrote the film *High Flying Bird*, directed by Steven Soderbergh, which premiered on Netflix. McCraney’s plays include *Ms. Blakk for President* (co-written with Tina Landau), *The Brother/Sister Plays* trilogy, *Head of Passes*, *Wig Out!*, and *Choir Boy*. McCraney’s numerous awards include the Whiting Award, Steinberg Playwright Award, Doris Duke Artist Award, Windham-Campbell Prize, London Evening Standard Award for Most Promising Playwright, New York Times Outstanding Playwright Award, the Paula Vogel Award, and a 2013 MacArthur Fellowship.

CAST

Scott Bellis (Mr. Pendleton), **Andrew Broderick** (Pharus Jonathan Young), **Clarence “CJ” Jura** (Junior Davis), **Anton May** (David Heard), **Stewart Adam McKensy** (Headmaster Marrow), **Kwaku Okyere** (Bobby Marrow), **Savion Roach** (Anthony Justin “AJ” James)

CREATIVE TEAM

Mike Payette (Director), **Floyd Ricketts** (Composer, Arranger & Musical Director), **Dawn Pemberton** (Musical Director), **Natasha Powell** (Movement Director), **Lisa Goebel** (Associate Movement Director & Intimacy Director), **Rachel Forbes** (Set/Costume Designer), **Sophie Tang** (Lighting Designer), **Kate De Lorme** (Sound Designer), **Erika Morey** (Stage Manager), **Peter Jotkus** (Assistant Stage Manager)

SHOWTIMES + SPECIAL PERFORMANCES

Evenings: Tue–Thu, 7:30 PM; Fri & Sat, 8 PM

Matinees: Wed, 1:30 PM; Sat & Sun, 2 PM

[Sunday Salon](#): Sun, Feb 4, 2 PM

[Talkback Tuesday](#): Tue, Feb 13, 7:30 PM

[VocalEye Performances](#): Sun, Feb 18, 2 PM; Fri, Feb 23, 8 PM

SEASON SPONSORS



ABOUT THE ARTS CLUB THEATRE COMPANY

The Arts Club Theatre Company is situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, in particular the [xʷməθkʷəy̓əm](#) (Musqueam), [Skwxwú7mesh](#) (Squamish), and [Sel̓il̓wítulh](#) (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. As we are all here together, we invite you to reflect on your relationship to these lands.

The Arts Club is one of the largest not-for-profit theatre organizations in the country and is the principal gathering place for the theatrical arts in British Columbia. Comprising three unique venues across Vancouver, the Arts Club welcomes more than a quarter million guests annually, tours provincially and nationally, and engages students and artists alike through educational and professional programs.

Above all, the Arts Club is dedicated to the advancement of local artists telling stories from around the globe and, in particular, those of our region. From this, we believe that culture expands, an understanding of differences is nurtured, and art bursts forth. The Arts Club was founded in 1964 and is currently led by Artistic Director Ashlie Corcoran and Executive Director Peter Cathie White.

A not-for-profit registered charity · No. 11921 3551 RR0001

MEDIA CONTACT

Tanya Banerjee publicity@artsclub.com

artsclub.com

facebook.com/theArtsClub

twitter.com/theArtsClub

instagram.com/TheArtsClub/

youtube.com/ArtsClubTheatreCompany