GHOST LIGHT

a haunted night of songs and stories
from KC’s cultural crossroads

OCTOBER 22, 23, 24 &
OCTOBER 29, 30, 31

ON THE SOUTH LAWN
OF THE NELSON-ATKINS
MUSEUM OF ART
presents

Ghost Light:
A Haunted Night of Songs and Stories
from KC’s Cultural Crossroads

Concept by Stuart Carden

Performances (in order of appearance)

in the night ................................................................. Sam Wells
witches Brew ............................................................... Sam Wells
Tailypo ................................................................. Nathan Louis Jackson
Penny Brook Lane .................................................... Jessica Paige
Zombie ................................................................. Jessica Paige
La Llorana or “The Weeping Woman” ..................... Maria Vasquez Boyd
Dead Daffodils ......................................................... Madisen Ward featuring Adee Dancy
Cold Joe ................................................................. Madisen Ward featuring Adee Dancy
Ora Mae ................................................................. Jane Barnette
Open My Heart ......................................................... Freight Train Rabbit Killer
Struck by the Knife .................................................. Freight Train Rabbit Killer
Little Black Train ..................................................... Freight Train Rabbit Killer

Production Crew

Sound Designer / Audio Board Operator (A1) ........... Miles Mosher
Lighting Designer / Electrician .................................... Matt Mahr
Assistant Lighting Designer / Electrician ..................... Margaret Spare
Carpenter ................................................................. Paul Docter
Stagehand ............................................................... Sheridan McKinley

2020 • 2021 Season Underwriters

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A note from the artistic director...

Dear friends,

Welcome to KCRrep’s first annual Ghost Light. We are thrilled for you to join us on the atmospheric grounds of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art as we launch this family-friendly holiday tradition.

Ghost Light is our twist on a classic evening of ghost storytelling. Tonight, you will not only hear new adaptations of classic ghost stories, but also experience the debut of original songs by some of our favorite Kansas City musicians. These new songs and stories were commissioned by KCRep and created specifically for Ghost Light – you are the first audience to experience them.

Tonight’s storytellers weave together tales from America’s cultural crossroads. Casting a mournful spell, storyteller Maria Vasquez Boyd gives us a re-envisioned take on the classic Latin American ghost story, “La Llorana” or “The Weeping Woman.” Former KCRrep playwright in residence, Nathan Louis Jackson, updates “Tailypo,” the American folklore monster story, and sets it right here and right now in Kansas City. Rounding out our spooky tales, witch maven, Jane Barnette, brews up the tale of “Ora Mae” – a young woman who unearths a startling discovery as she travels alone through the dark hills of Appalachia.

Our Ghost Light musicians transport us with original songs inspired by hauntings and the haunted. Singer-songwriter Sam Wells invites you to ‘think twice’ about what lurks under your bed with her darkly playful, “in the night.” With the brooding “Cold Joe,” Madisen Ward creates a journey of mystery, ghostly revenge, and transcendence. Jessica Paige sings an achingly beautiful portrait of a ghostly girl and her little black cat with “Penny Brook Lane.” And Freight Train Rabbit Killer’s doom blues duo Kris Bruders and Mark Smeltzer pump some blood through our dark hearts with their infectious rhythms, distinctive hand-made sound, and ritualistic music making.

As an added treat – along with some tricks, you’ll also savor our Ghost Light musicians when they rock-out unique covers of iconic seasonal songs and clever musical mash-ups.

What a joy for our Kansas City community to come together on this Autumn night on the lawn of the iconic Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Ghost Light’s all-ages, outdoor music and storytelling experience is one of many safe and enriching events we are creating to help uplift and connect our beloved community during this unique time.

AND NOW, we invite you to settle in and open your imaginations to what may lurk at the edge of darkness...

Stuart Carden
MEET THE ARTISTS

Kris Bruders has been a part of the Kansas City music community for over 15 years. He is a self-taught musician and writer with over 10 releases with such bands as Cadillac Flambe’ (Blues/Rock), GASCAN (Rock/Punk), and Freight Train Rabbit Killer (Doom Blues). He also works with his wife Jazz singer Havilah Bruders in Havilah and Kris (Americana Duo) and Copper Threading (Folk). He is also a co-founder of the weekly musicians appreciation showcase “Here’s to the Roots” that started in 2014 and also co-founder of the former annual Murder Ballad Ball started in 2009 (a benefit for musicians health care). With 2 European and many nation wide tours, festivals, and special events music is and has been his life.

FREIGHT TRAIN RABBIT KILLER
MUSICIAN

After forming a band in northwest Missouri, Mark Smeltzer moved to Kansas City to pursue music and make art in the late 80’s. A decade later he was a founding member of the Rural Grit Happy Hour, a weekly showcase of American musical roots that still goes on weekly after 20 plus years. In 2006 Smeltzer formed Experimental Instrument Orchestra (E.I.O.) that combined construction of instruments and musical storytelling. Currently he tours at home and abroad with Freight Train Rabbit Killer, a band he co-founded with Kris Bruders in 2013. He lives in midtown Kansas City with his wife and son.
MEET THE ARTISTS

JANE BARNETTE
STORYTELLER
Jane Barnette is an Associate Professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University of Kansas, where she teaches courses in dramaturgy, theatre history, script analysis, and seminars in theatrical adaptation and the performance of gender and sexuality. Her book *Adapturgy: The Dramaturg’s Art and Theatrical Adaptation* explores the powerful alchemy of dramaturgically-savvy adaptations for the stage, and her forthcoming book analyzes depictions of Witchy characters onstage as well as in popular culture. Jane writes and adapts for the stage, performs, and is a professional dramaturg. Her recent directing credits include the regional premiere of *Sycorax* at KU and *The Book Club Play* for Kansas Repertory Theatre in Lawrence.

MARIA VASQUEZ BOYD
STORYTELLER
Maria Vasquez Boyd is producer/host, of ARTSPEAK RADIO, a weekly live program on 90.1FM KKFI Kansas City Community Radio that features the visual and literary arts community around the country. She is a founding member of the Latino Writers Collective, a storyteller, poet, artist, painter, who exhibits her work across the country. A graduate from the Kansas City Art Institute, Boyd returned to teach in the Design and Illustration Department at KCAI, taught at the Nelson-Atkins Museum, worked for Hallmark Cards, and served as gallery coordinator for the Writers Place, Guadalupe Center, and the Mexican Museum in Chicago.
Adee Dancy was born and raised in the Kansas City area, and has spent all of her career working in the music and theatre community within the city. She has been a music director, a director, an actress, a singer, a pit orchestra cellist, an orchestral cellist, a songwriter, a teacher, and an arranger, each inspiring her in a different way! She has worked with ensembles, artists and organizations such as Faust Theatre, Artist Community Project, The Arts Asylum, MikiP and the Swallowtails, True Lions, Lily B Moonflower, Fathers, “HANNAH”, Shawnee Mission Theatre in the Park, Harmony Project KC, Music Theatre Kansas City, Musical Theatre Heritage, and the Midwest Chamber Ensemble. Music is her love and her passion, and she feels lucky to be able to do it for her career!

Nathan Louis Jackson is an alum of Kansas City Kansas Community College and Kansas State University. He received the Lila Acheson Wallace fellowship and did his graduate work at The Juilliard School. His plays include Broke-ology (KCRep in 2010), When I Come to Die (Lincoln Center in 2011), The Mancerhios, and The Last Black Play. He has received commissions from Lincoln Center, The Roundabout Theater Company, and Manhattan Theatre Club. He has twice won the Lorraine Hansberry Playwriting Award, is the recipient of the Mark Twain Comedy Playwriting Award, and was awarded the Kennedy Center’s Gold Medallion. His work for television includes Southland (NBC), Shameless (Showtime), Resurrection (ABC), and Luke Cage (Netflix).
MEET THE ARTISTS

JESSICA PAIGE
MUSICIAN

Voted Kansas City’s Best Vocalist (Pitch 2018), Jessica Paige is a master storyteller, translating personal experience into Americana Pop music that is sophisticated, diverse in its influences, and instantly relatable. Her upcoming EP *Oh, Mister* is scheduled for release Fall of 2020. Jessica has been an American Idol semi-finalist, showcase artist of Folk Alliance International, featured vocalist with the Kansas City Jazz Orchestra, has opened for international recording artist Corinne Bailey Ray, toured nationally and self released her first album, Sweet Nothings. A staple in the Kansas City music community playing an average of 200 shows a year, she has played nearly every venue in Kansas City from Ça Va to Kauffman Stadium.

MADISEN WARD
MUSICIAN

Madisen Ward is one half of the mother-son folk duo called Madisen Ward and the Mama Bear. Madisen and his Mother Ruth Ward performed in coffeehouses in Independence, MO for many years before reaching national recognition. They’ve now toured all throughout North America, as well as overseas. Performing original folk and Americana style music, rooted in their own organically raw delivery. They’ve opened for artists such as B.B. King, Sufjan Stevens, Old Crow Medicine Show, Rodrigo Y Gabriela, Pixies, and more. They’ve been featured on Live with Jools Holland, The Today Show, CBS Sunday Morning, and The David Letterman Show.
MEET THE ARTISTS

SAM WELLS
MUSICIAN

The delicate pairing of Sam Wells’ fiery voice and enchanting baritone ukulele could steal your heart. It is with open arms Kansas City has embraced her – from offering musical residencies at local hotspots Repeal 18th and Bar K – to a spot in what would’ve been (pre-Covid) the 2020 line up at Boulevardia. Through the use of her looper pedal, Sam graduates the traditionally light and beachy instrument into a Blues-Americana force with ease. The versatility of Sam Wells’ artistry is best highlighted between her first two singles, evolving through every song, leading you on a journey of self discovery alongside her own.
SOS! Help KCRep meet the match and save our seats! When you make a donation by December 9, the Victor E. and Caroline E. Schutte Foundation Trust E, David W. Frantze and Bank of America, N.A., Trustees will match your donation of any size – up to $50,000!

Because of donors like you, KCRep is able to reimagine what theatre can be in the distant world that COVID-19 has made for us. Your donation ensures the ghost light is illuminating the theatre in our absence, ready to welcome us all back together when it is over.

CLICK HERE TO MAKE A DONATION

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Kansas City Repertory Theatre is thankful for the guidance and service of our Board of Directors.

CLICK HERE FOR A LIST OF OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SPECIAL THANKS TO:
**STUART CARDEN (Artistic Director)** is a director, producer, and educator who has worked throughout the United States creating vibrant performance experiences ranging from classic literary adaptations to intercultural drama to lo-fi/hi-imagination spectacle. He has a particular passion for creating cross-disciplinary performance and original concert-theatre hybrids that feature bands and music-making at the heart of the theatrical experience. As the Associate Artistic Director of Writers Theatre in Chicago, Stuart partnered on five seasons where he co-produced over 25 productions, advanced Writers’ new play development program, created multiple audience engagement and enrichment programs and was intimately involved in the design of the theatre’s $32 million Jeanne Gang designed theatre complex. Prior to Writers, Stuart spent two years in Pittsburgh as Associate Artistic Director of the new play theatre, City Theatre Company. As a director, Stuart has developed and directed plays for many of America’s leading theatres including The Old Globe, The Lyric Opera, The Second City, The Goodman Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, New Victory Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Silk Road Rising, Victory Gardens, People’s Light, Northlight Theatre, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, ArtsEmerson, The Wallis, Philadelphia Theatre Company, and Chicago Children’s Theatre. With a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusivity, Stuart has created and advocated for inclusive practices as a freelance director as well as creating institutional initiatives and programs that make space and provide opportunities for underrepresented artists. His commitment to ED&I in the American theatre is grounded in the belief that all voices deserve to be heard, lifted, and illuminated while audiences deserve to see themselves reflected on the stage. In addition to his professional accomplishments, Stuart is a committed teacher and mentor, often teaching and lecturing at institutions such as Carnegie Mellon University, DePaul University, and Loyola University, among others. Stuart holds a B.A. in Theatre from Hanover College and an M.F.A. in Directing from Carnegie Mellon University. He is a member of the Society for Stage Directors and Choreographers and represented by Beth Blickers and the Agency for Performing Arts. Stuart is married to contemporary and public art curator Neysa Page-Lieberman and dad to eight-year-old twins.

**ANGELA LEE GIERAS (Executive Director)** Angela Lee Gieras is in her eighth season leading KCRep’s business operations. She co-leads with the artistic director to fulfill the company’s artistic vision and mission. During her career, she has overseen the production of over 50 plays including twelve world premieres with three artistic directors. A former commercial banker, Gieras began her career in arts administration at the Warehouse Theatre in Greenville, South Carolina, and went on to serve as the associate managing director of the Dallas Theater Center, where she led finance and operations and oversaw the acquisition of a new production facility. Just prior to joining KCRep, she served as director of development at Florida Theatre in Jacksonville, where she executed fundraising strategies that nearly doubled annual giving in three years. Gieras earned an MBA and MA in arts administration from Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas and a BS in finance with a minor in theatre from the University of Florida. She has guest lectured at the University of Florida, Southern Methodist University and at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Ms. Gieras serves on the board of directors for League of Resident Theatre (LORT), Theatre Communications Group (TCG) and as co-chair of the LORT Equity Diversity and Inclusion Committee. She has served as a panelist for the NEA, and the Alumni Board for SMU’s Cox School of Business. She is a founding board member for Theatre Alliance of Kansas City (TAKC) and a member of the Executive Women’s Leadership Council at the KC Chamber.
MEET THE STAFF

Leadership

Artistic Director ................................................................. Stuart Carden
Executive Director ............................................................. Angela Lee Gieras

Administration and Finance

Director of Finance .............................................................. Melanie Coleman
Manager, Information Services ............................................ Michelle Blaine
Finance Manager ................................................................. Caycee Garlow
General Manager ............................................................... Amy M. Abels Owen

Artistic

Associate Artistic Director –
KCRep/UMKC Theatre Partnership ................................. Jason Chanos
Artistic Producer ............................................................... Kim Martin-Cotten
Artistic Associate .............................................................. Yetunde Felix-Ukwu
Production Manager ......................................................... Daniel R. Earnest
Assistant Production Manager ............................................ April Brewer
Company Manager ............................................................ Amanda Arany

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Director of Development ..................................................... MaryLee Guthrie
Associate Director of Development ..................................... Carrie Lenahan
Development Operations Manager ................................. Keri Losche Noerrlinger
Grant Writer ........................................................................ Diana Silver

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Director of Education & Community Programs .................. Melinda McCrary

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Director of Marketing & Communications ........................ Jana Liles
Associate Director of Marketing & Audience Development .... Andrew Cotlar
Digital Marketing Manager ................................................ Dayna Meyer
Social Media & Content Supervisor .................................... Jennifer Spaw
Ticketing Agent ................................................................ Claire McEwen
Public Relations (Press Contact) ......................................... Ellen McDonald