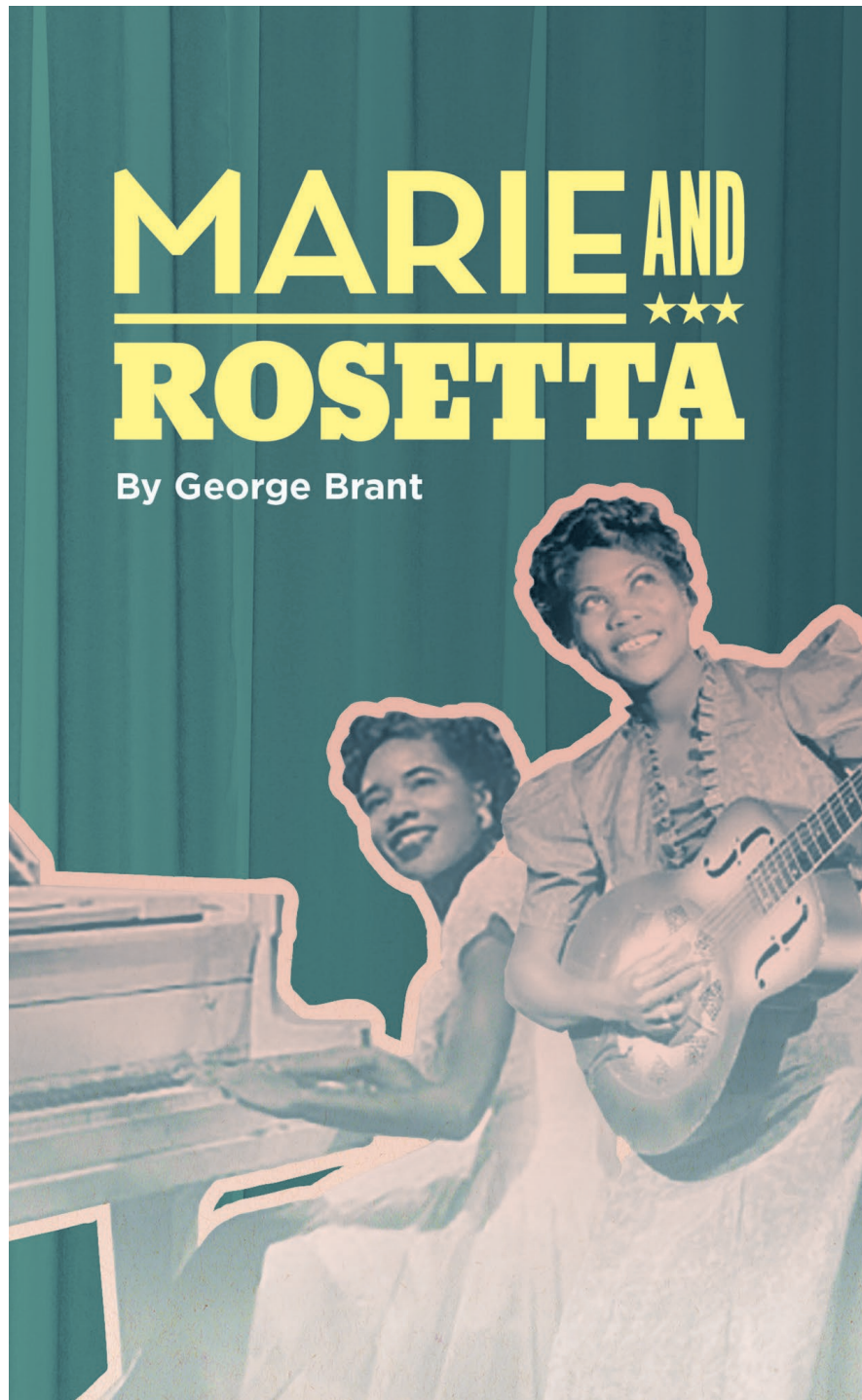


# NORTHLIGHT THEATRE



## ACCESSIBILITY GUIDE

Image Description: A poster for Northlight Theatre's production of Marie and Rosetta. A black and white image of two Black women. One of them is smiling while holding a guitar and looking off to the right. She wears a light top with a ruffled collar. The other woman is smiling while sitting behind her at a piano and looking off to the left.

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## GUIDE INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Northlight's production of *Marie and Rosetta* by George Brant.

This production will run at Northlight Theatre from July 6 through August 6, 2023. The address is 9501 Skokie Blvd, Skokie, IL, 60077.

This guide holds many different accessibility tools to make your experience at the show as comfortable as possible. Please be aware that not every element of this guide will be useful to each individual. Therefore, please feel free to pick and choose which accessibility tools would be most beneficial to you.

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## THEATRE

### PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

#### **Tuesday - Thursday Evenings** (all times are estimates)

- 6:30pm The lobby opens for concessions & socializing.
- 7:00pm The auditorium opens for you to take your seat.
- 7:30pm The show will begin.
- 9:30pm The show will end.

#### **Friday - Saturday Evenings** (all times are estimates)

- 7:00pm The lobby opens for concessions & socializing.
- 7:30pm The auditorium opens for you to take your seat.
- 8:00pm The show will begin.
- 10:00pm The show will end.

#### **Saturday - Sunday Matinees** (all times are estimates)

- 1:30pm The lobby opens for concessions & socializing.
- 2:00pm The auditorium opens for you to take your seat.
- 2:30pm The show will begin.
- 4:30pm The show will end.

#### **Weekday Matinees** (all times are estimates)

- 12:00pm The lobby opens for concessions & socializing.
- 12:30pm The auditorium opens for you to take your seat.
- 1:00pm The show will begin.
- 3:00pm The show will end.

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### **FULL SHOW SYNOPSIS** **(spoilers ahead)**

*Please note that the following was created during a preview performance. It is possible that changes to the script and/or production may not be reflected below.*

Run time: 1 hour and 45 minutes with no intermission

Sister Rosetta Tharpe is an African American woman in her early 30's. She plays guitar and sings in a bluesy voice. Marie Knight is an African American woman who is in her early twenties. She's a traditional alto gospel singer and plays piano. The play follows the first rehearsal session for Rosetta and Marie inside a funeral home surrounded by empty caskets. Marie applies makeup onto Rosetta's face as they get ready for the performance taking place that night. For rehearsal Rosetta starts with the song "This Train" on piano and sings. Marie and Rosetta talk about how Marie recently joined Rosetta's band. Rosetta personally scouted out Marie from her original quartet. Marie wonders why she was picked and questions if she is good enough. Next, Marie rehearses the song, "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?"

Rosetta learns that Marie is a married woman who has two kids back home. Marie talks about how Rosetta isn't seen as much of a saint anymore by the gospel community and has been exiled from that community. She begins to question whether or not she's making the right choice by starting her music career with Rosetta. Disagreement begins to rise between them as they try to compromise their contrasting musical styles. They try to overcome this difference by rehearsing the song "Rock Me". Eventually Rosetta puts her foot down and says that she won't tone down her

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music for Marie. Marie begins to loosen up in her musical style to match Rosetta's as they sing "Didn't it Rain"

After this they begin to talk about their husbands. Rosetta had a husband before her current one. Marie says her husband is a preacher. At first he loved hearing her sing throughout the day, but as time went on her husband tried to silence her singing voice. Rosetta talks about how her first husband physically abused her. She decided to leave her first husband when the beatings got so bad it began to interfere with her ability to play music. Eventually the two of them decide that they will soon leave their husbands at the same time so they can enjoy their lives together.

Rosetta begins talking about her time singing at the Cotton Club. She mentions that she performed her music at the church in the morning and in the club at night. The performances were held in a plantation and she contemplates the morality of her work. She then transitions into singing the deep blues song, "I Looked Down the Line". Afterwards, Rosetta shows off her new electric guitar to Marie, who is skeptical of whether or not people will accept Rosetta's choice in modern music. Rosetta decides that they should improvise a new song using the guitar. Rosetta then finally asks Marie if she truly wants to perform with Rosetta even though they have completely different musical styles. Marie plays the song "Amazing Grace" in Rosetta's new style which proves to Rosetta that Marie wants to perform with her.

They play the song "Strange Things Happen Every Day" completely in tune with each other. Suddenly, the tone shifts and Rosetta becomes serious. She tells Marie that there is no show for her to perform. They are in a funeral home in Philadelphia, and Rosetta has passed away. Marie has been recalling the time she

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first rehearsed with Rosetta all those years ago. Marie explains what has happened in the past years ever since that rehearsal. On the upside they became famous musicians, divorced their husbands, and bought a house together. However, this only lasted three years because Marie's mother and two sons died in a house fire. After this tragedy she decided to leave the music business and became a preacher herself.

Marie goes on to explain what happened to Rosetta. She says that Rosetta got married for a third time, and that the ceremony took place in a baseball stadium in front of twenty-five thousand fans. However, almost overnight, Rosetta's act dropped in popularity and she was playing in church basements. Eventually she lost her leg to gout and her husband left her. This didn't stop her from performing guitar around Philadelphia though, until eventually she passed away. Rosetta gives Marie her guitar to play one more song. Marie finishes Rosetta's makeup by putting on her own lipstick and giving Rosetta one final kiss.

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### **SENSITIVITY GUIDE**

#### **CONTENT NOTES**

- The play takes place inside a funeral home with multiple empty caskets
- Mentions of death
- Use of the n-word
- Mentions of domestic violence
- Mentions of children dying in a house fire
- Characters talk about experiencing racism and discrimination
- Characters use the word ass and damn

#### **SENSORY NOTES**

- There is live music throughout the entire performance, featuring an acoustic piano, an acoustic guitar, and an electric guitar.
- Towards the end of the play, a character brings out a white electric guitar. This guitar is used a handful of times for the remainder of the play, and it can be very loud.

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### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **Does this production contain any technical elements that could be loud, bright, or shocking?**

Like many of Northlight's plays, this production will include technical elements that may trigger sensory sensitivities. Northlight has done its best to design elements so that they will be accessible to all, but each person is different, thereby making it impossible to plan for every individual. If you believe that you may have some sensory sensitivities to the show, please consult the guide above to make you are aware of them before they happen. Please also remember that Northlight has noise canceling headphones as well as sunglasses available to borrow for any of these moments.

#### **What types of accessibility options does Northlight provide?**

Northlight provides a wealth of accessibility options for its audience members. These tools can be broken up into two specific categories: Specific Date Accessibility and General Accessibility. For specific date accessibility, Northlight will provide accommodations on predetermined dates throughout the run. We highly recommend reserving tickets for these dates ahead of time. These accommodations include: ASL Interpretation, Audio Description, Open Captions, and Relaxed/Sensory Friendly Performances.

For general accessibility, Northlight provides a wide range of tools that can be requested at any performance of the show free of charge. These include: assisted listening devices and accessible



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seating. For accessible seating, it is recommended you request the necessary seats when purchasing your tickets, as they may not be available the day of the performance. For assisted listening devices, please go to the House Manager or ask an usher.

For more information, visit [northlight.org/visit/#accessibility](https://northlight.org/visit/#accessibility) or email Ruben Carrazana, Community Engagement Manager, at [rcarrazana@northlight.org](mailto:rcarrazana@northlight.org).

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## REFERENCE PHOTOS

	<p><b>North Shore Center for the Performing Arts</b> Exterior</p> <p>Id: The front of North Shore Center on a sunny day. The building has white columns and its sides are primarily made of windows.</p>
	<p><b>North Shore Center for the Performing Arts</b> Entrance</p> <p>Id: The doors to North Shore's building. The doors are paneled glass and there is a hand railing leading up. A man is entering the doors.</p>
	<p><b>North Shore Center for the Performing Arts</b> Parking Lot</p> <p>Id: The parking lot at the theater. It is a sunny day with many clouds, there is a sign that says "Theatre Parking Only" and several cars parked.</p>
	<p><b>Northlight's Auditorium</b></p> <p>Id: The doors leading directly into the theater. There are three doors which are all light brown wood. Two doors are open. A sign above the doors reads North Theatre. A man is waving hello.</p>
	<p><b>The Set for <i>Marie and Rosetta</i></b></p> <p>Id: The set is the inside of a funeral home. There is a single wall against the back of the theatre. It is very tall, and made pale, ash-colored wooden planks running horizontally. There is a small alcove inset in the wall with some colored windows and a large tan casket. A piano is center stage, and a brown, round, wooden table is closer to the audience on the right with two chairs around it. There is another brown casket behind the table with the lid open showing that it's empty. There is a door on the left side of the wall.</p>

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 A portrait of Ruben Carrazana, a Hispanic man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a dark maroon sweater. He is sitting and resting his head on his hand, looking directly at the camera against a black background.	<p><b>Ruben Carrazana</b> Community Engagement Manager</p> <p>Id: A Hispanic man sits and stares at the camera with his head resting on his hand. He has black hair and wears a dark maroon sweater in front of a black wall.</p>
 A portrait of BJ Jones, an older man with a white beard and hair going silver, wearing a dark sweater over a white collared shirt. He is smiling and looking at the camera against a warm, blurred background.	<p><b>BJ Jones</b> Artistic Director</p> <p>Id: A picture of a jolly older man with a white beard and hair going silver.</p>
 A portrait of Bethany Thomas, a Black woman with curly black hair, wearing a black tank top. She is looking at the camera with her lips parted slightly, showing her teeth, against a light gray background.	<p><b>Bethany Thomas</b> Rosetta</p> <p>Id: A Black woman with curly black hair looks at the camera with her lips parted slightly showing her teeth. She wears a black tank top and is in front of a light gray background.</p>
 A portrait of Alexis Roston, a Black woman with reddish-brown hair styled in a bun, wearing a light blue top. She is smiling and looking at the camera against a light, textured background.	<p><b>Alexis Roston</b> Marie</p> <p>Id: A Black woman with brown eyes stares at the camera with a smile. Her hair has a slight reddish color, and she wears a light blue top.</p>