



'CHRISTMAS IN HARMONY'
Cast Bios

ASHLEIGH MURRAY (Harmony) – Ashleigh Murray starred in The CW's "Riverdale" and "Katy Keene" in the role of Josie McCoy. Josephine "Josie" McCoy was a main character known as the lead singer in the popular band Josie and the Pussycats. In film, Murray had a large supporting role in the MGM Studios remake of the '80s cult classic *Valley Girl*, as well as playing the lead in *Deidra & Laney Rob a Train*, which was nominated for the Audience Award Best of NEXTt at the Sundance Film Festival. Murray was born in Kansas City, Missouri. Early on, she enjoyed studying piano, jazz and hip-hop dance. After graduating high school, Murray moved to New York City, where she studied at the New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts and graduated in 2009.

#

LUKE JAMES (Kyle) – From starring on hit television series and critically acclaimed films, to releasing #1 albums and touring the country with the biggest superstars in music, actor and three-time Grammy nominated singer/songwriter Luke James has become one of the most watched multi-hyphenate talents in the entertainment industry today.

This year James can be seen starring on the critically acclaimed Showtime drama series "The Chi". Created by Emmy Award winner Lena Waithe and produced by the Emmy and Golden Globe Award-winning artist Common, the series follows the lives of a group of people in the South Side neighborhood of Chicago. James joined the cast in season three as newcomer Victor "Trig" Taylor, Jake's (Michael V. Epps) estranged older brother, and was immediately a scene stealer and promoted to a series regular for the fourth season. Season four of "The Chi" recently aired on Showtime.

On stage, James can next be seen starring in Keenan Scott II's play *Thoughts of a Colored Man* at Broadway's Golden Theatre, opening Sunday, October 31st. The limited engagement will be the first new play to open on Broadway, following a near two-year shutdown due to COVID-19. Additionally, James recently recurred opposite Academy Award nominated actress Cynthia Erivo in "Genius: Aretha," National Geographic's critically acclaimed anthology series exploring Aretha Franklin's musical genius and incomparable career. James portrayed Franklin's ex-husband Glynn Turman, a well-known actor, writer, director and producer who coached Franklin prior to their romantic involvement and marriage.

Additional acting credits for James include: starring on the hit FOX/Lee Daniels musical drama series "Star," HBO's "Insecure," USA's "Unsolved: The Murders of Tupac and the Notorious B.I.G.," and his role as R&B singer Johnny Gill on BET's "The New Edition Story," which drew in record ratings of 29M+ viewers during premiere week. James can also be heard in "Hold Still, Vincent" the Gemma Chan-produced podcast for QCODE about the 1982 murder of Vincent Chin. On the film front James appeared in the smash hit Universal Pictures comedy, *Little*, opposite Issa Rae, Regina Hall and Marsai Martin.

In music, James released his breakout independent album, to feel love/d, in January 2020 which is his most intimate, poetic and vulnerable piece of work to date. The album garnered a 2021 Grammy nomination for Best R&B Album alongside John Legend, Gregory Porter, Ant Clemons, and Giveon. As James' first fully independent musical release, to feel love/d was the only indie album to be nominated in the category and marks the second Grammy nomination of James' career. Bringing James back to his R&B roots, to feel love/d features euphoric yet provocative lyrics mixed with awe-inspiring, unparalleled vocal talent. He pulled out all the stops with massive collaborations on the record, teaming up with Lucky Daye, Big K.R.I.T., BJ the Chicago Kid, Kirk Franklin and Ro James, as well as production from powerhouse producers Danja, Cobaine Ivory, Guitarboy and Sir Dylan. Touted as "rich in sound and content" and "some of the most soulful performances you'll hear today" by the media, James returned to the music scene in full force with some of his most dynamic and meaningful work yet.

Born and raised in New Orleans, James was immersed in the rich musical heritage of the city at an early age, even taking up the saxophone for a number of years. As a child, he was heavily influenced by an array of artists, from Marvin Gaye and Aretha Franklin to Miles Davis and D'Angelo. It was after seeing D'Angelo in concert at age 11 that James decided to pursue music as his career path. He got his start professionally singing background for Tyrese and went on to write for top artists including Justin Bieber, Chris Brown and Snoh Aalegra, to name a few. As James expanded his solo career, he went on to perform alongside the late Prince and open for Beyoncé's Mrs. Carter Show World Tour. In 2012, he received his first Grammy nomination for Best R&B Performance for his hit song "I Want You" from his first mixtape #Luke, and received his second Grammy nomination in 2015 for Best R&B Song: "Options" ft. Rick Ross, from his self-titled debut album Luke James.

James is currently based in Atlanta, Georgia, where he is hard at work on his multitude of projects.

#

LORETTA DEVINE (Mama) – Equally at home on stage and on screen, award-winning actress Loretta Devine has created some of the most memorable roles in theatre, film and television.

Devine first captured national attention in the role of Lorrell, one of the three original *Dreamgirls* in Michael Bennett's classic award-winning Broadway musical of the same name. She followed that performance with a fiery portrayal of Lillian in Bob Fosse's critically acclaimed stage production *Big Deal*. Subsequent work in George C. Wolfe's *Colored Museum* and *Lady Day at Emerson Bar and Grill*, cemented Devine's status as one of the most talented and versatile stage actresses.

Film roles soon followed including a poignant turn as a single mother opposite Whitney Houston, Angela Bassett and Gregory Hines in *Waiting to Exhale*, which earned Devine her first NAACP Image Award for Best Supporting Actress. Devine also won an NAACP Image Award for Best Supporting Actress for her work in Penny Marshall's *The Preacher's Wife* and received an Independent Spirit Award nomination for Best Actress for her work in *Women Thou Art Loosed*. Devine was featured in the Academy Award-winning film *Crash* and the hit movie of *Dreamgirls*. Some of her additional film credits include appearances in the successful *Urban Legend* franchise, *I Am Sam* opposite Michelle Pfeiffer and Sean Penn, *Kingdom Come*, *What Women Want*, *Punks*, *Hoodlums*, *Down in the Delta* and *Stanley and Iris*.

Devine's more recent film credits include co-starring roles in *This Christmas* and *First Sunday*, both of which opened number one at the box office. Devine voiced the character of Delta in Disney's *Beverly Hills Chihuahua*. She appeared with Chris Rock in Sony Screen Gems remake of *Death at a Funeral* and *Lottery Ticket* for Alcon/Warner Brothers. Devine portrayed The Woman in Green in Tyler Perry's adaptation of Ntozake Shange's, *For Colored Girls*. In 2011, Devine starred in two leading roles in the film *Jumping the Broom* with Paula Patton, Laz Alonso and Angela Bassett and in the Tyler Perry directed film *Madea's Big Happy Family*, both films earned top spots at the box office. Devine followed up her box office hits with a strong lineup of independent films including Robert Townsend's *In the Hive*, which earned Devine a NAACP Image Award nomination for Best Actress in a Motion Picture, *You're Not You*, alongside Hilary Swank, James Franco's *The Sound and the Fury* and the Kristen Wiig dramedy, *Welcome to Me*. She will next appear in Paramount's *Spell* and *The Starling* opposite Melissa McCarthy.

On television, Devine became a critical darling in her Emmy award-winning role as Adele on ABC's hit medical drama "Grey's Anatomy." Her numerous credits include roles on series such as "The Cosby Show," spin-off "A Different World," Eddie Murphy's stop-motion animated series "The PJs," David E Kelly's "Boston Public," ABC's "Eli Stone" and alongside Jennifer Love-Hewitt on Lifetime's "The Client List." She starred on NBC's critically acclaimed sitcom "The Carmichael Show" and co-starred in the third season of BET's "Being Mary Jane," as the titular character's main antagonist, Cece. Devine continues to voice Hallie the Hippo on Disney Channel's Peabody Award-Winning animated series, "Doc McStuffins," and she currently stars in the Netflix family series, "Family Reunion," which features an all-black cast and crew. Devine also appeared in a buzzy guest star role on Starz' "P-Valley."

With a career spanning three decades, Devine has earned much praise and accolades for her work on both the big and small screen. For her work as Adele on "Grey's Anatomy," she earned both a Primetime Emmy Award and a Primetime Emmy Award nomination, a Gracie Allen Award for Outstanding Female Actor in a Featured Role, a nomination for Best Guest Performer in a Drama Series from the Critics' Choice Television Awards and a NAACP Image Award and a NAACP Image Award nomination. In total, Devine has won nine NAACP Image Awards and has received a record 24 nominations. Devine has received Lifetime Achievement Awards from both the Pan African Film Festival and the NAACP Theatre Awards and the Thespian Award from the LA Femme International Film Festival.

Devine graduated from the University of Houston and later received a Master of Fine Arts from Brandeis University. She also received a Doctorate of Humane Letters, as well as a Distinguished Alumni Award from The University of Houston.

She currently resides in Los Angeles.

#

MICHELLE WILLIAMS (Melo D Star) – Michelle Williams is a Grammy Award-winning, singer/songwriter, actress, entrepreneur, designer, television host and member of one of the most successful recording groups of all time, Destiny's Child. In 2018, Williams reunited with Beyonce Knowles-Carter and Kelly Rowland for along-awaited Destiny's Child reunion performance during both weekends of the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. She has also recorded four critically-acclaimed albums as a solo artist including Journey to Freedom whose song "Say Yes" was certified Gold.

Between recording projects, Williams made her theatrical stage debut as the title role of the hit Broadway musical *Aida*. She has since appeared in productions of *The Color Purple* as well as Broadway and London's West End productions of *Chicago*. Williams also was featured in the acclaimed stage play *What My Husband Doesn't Know*, and a national tour with the musical *Fela!* Williams also starred in the Oxygen series "Fix My Choir" and has served as a guest host on talk shows such as "The View," "Entertainment Tonight," "The Real" and many more. In 2019, after making it to the semi-final round, Michelle was revealed as Butterfly on the top-rated Fox television show, "The Masked Singer!"

As an entrepreneur, Williams recently launched Believe at Home™ by Michelle Williams. The sophisticated bedding collection features exquisite and vibrant comforters, duvets, coverlets, sheets and shams inspired by her grandmother's quilting.

An advocate for mental health and empowerment, Williams is an ambassador for the Office on Women's Health, a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where she promotes awareness for maintaining optimum physical and mental health through nutrition, exercise, and proper medical care.

In 2021 Williams launched her first podcast, Checking In, in partnership with iHeartRadio. On the weekly podcast, she and her friends reveal their intimate experiences with depression, anxiety and their mental health journeys. Williams released her first book this year, also entitled Checking In.

-- HALLMARK CHANNEL --