



CMT AND THE PRODUCER OF "HATFIELDS & MCCOYS" TO PRODUCE "MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET" SERIES IN MEMPHIS

For More Information

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Partners in recruitment, Tennessee Film Commissioner Bob Raines and Memphis and Shelby County Film Commissioner Linn Sitler, join Nashville-based CMT and Thinkfactory Media in announcing today that Memphis and Shelby County will be the production base for the upcoming CMT television series, *Million Dollar Quartet* (working title), inspired by the Tony Award-winning musical. Telling the story of the early Sun Studio recording careers of such icons as Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Ike Turner, the series will focus on the often-turbulent career of Sam Phillips, the musical genius who first directed them toward stardom.

Led by Senate Majority Leader Mark Norris, the efforts of other Shelby County legislators Senator Reggie Tate, Representative Steve McManus, and Representative Curry Todd – backed by the entire Shelby County Delegation and General Assembly -- ensured last Legislative Session that the \$4 million needed to incentivize *Million Dollar Quartet* was earmarked for Memphis and Shelby County-based productions.

According to Memphis and Shelby County Film Commissioner Linn Sitler, "The work resulting from the alliance between the Tennessee Entertainment Commission and the Memphis and Shelby County Film and Television Commission convinced Thinkfactory Media Executive Producer, Leslie Greif, and Co-Executive Producer, Barry Berg, to shoot here. Unit Production Manager Christina Varotsis, the first to visit Memphis for the project, was an early champion. Vital recruitment support was provided by our Deputy Film Commissioner/Project Specialist Sharon Fox O'Guin and the state commission's Project Manager Gisela Moore."

Bob Raines said, "The Tennessee Entertainment Commission is excited to welcome the production of *Million Dollar Quartet* to the State. This series will produce high quality jobs for our local crew base while providing revenue for local production vendors and small business owners. This series will introduce iconic Memphis legends, music and locations to a new generation of fans. "

Filming will begin in late March, with pre-production kicking off with a giant casting call Saturday, February 13th, at Memphis' Humes Preparatory Academy Middle School – more

famously known as Humes High School, the alma mater of Elvis Presley. The school is located at 659 North Manassas Street. Casting hours are 9 am to 5 pm. The line for casting forms at 7 am. The production hopes to cast all the leads – such as Elvis, Trixie Dean (Elvis' girlfriend) Jerry Lee, Ike Turner – along with other roles and “extras.” Those who attend the casting call are asked to come in 1950s hair and wardrobe. For more information on the casting call, visit www.mdqseries.com.

Saturday's events continue with -- what else? --but a “Killer Karaoke” night at – where else? – but Jerry Lee Lewis' Café & Honky Tonk on Beale Street, beginning at 8 pm. Admission will be \$5.00 per person. Discount coupons for tickets to “Killer Karaoke,” along with coupons to several other Memphis restaurants, clubs and attractions, will be distributed at the casting call.

Local officials shared their enthusiasm for having *Million Dollar Quartet* base in Memphis – predicted to pour millions of dollars into local businesses, the hiring of local cast and professional crew, and at the same time providing a boost to Memphis' tourism and music industries.

Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland said, “We are delighted that CMT will be producing their *Million Dollar Quartet* series here as we remind the world ‘It Came from Memphis!’” Shelby County Mayor Mark H. Luttrell, Jr., stated: “We're so proud Sun Studio, the Arcade Restaurant and other historic places linked to our musical heritage will be seen by CMT fans around the world.” Kevin Kane, president and CEO of the Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau: “Memphis is as real and authentic as it gets, and we're excited the show has chosen to maintain that authenticity by filming in the city where a rock 'n' roll revolution was born.”

About Thinkfactory Media

Thinkfactory Media is a full-service production company that creates high-quality entertainment content. Renowned for award-winning productions, the company was the driving force behind the Emmy® and Golden Globe®-nominated hit mini-series *Hatfields & McCoy's* (History), starring Kevin Costner. Other recent credits include: The 10-hour television event *Texas Rising* (History), *Marriage Boot Camp* (We tv), *Marriage Boot Camp: Reality Stars* (We tv), *Married By Mom and Dad* (TLC), *Dead of Winter: The Donner Party* (The Weather Channel), *Vet School* (Nat Geo WILD) *Preachers' Daughters* (Lifetime), *R&B Divas: Atlanta* (TV One), *R&B Divas: Los Angeles* (TV One), *Queens of Drama* (Pop), *Jump!* (Lifetime), *Strange Love* (TLC), *Big Giant Swords* (Discovery), *Gene Simmons: Family Jewels* (A&E), *Tony Danza: Teach* (A&E), among many others. Find out more about Thinkfactory Media and its projects at www.ThinkfactoryMedia.com and follow them on Twitter at @TFactoryMedia.

About CMT

CMT, a unit of Viacom Inc. (NASDAQ: VIA, VIAB), is the leading television and digital authority on country music and entertainment, reaching more than 92 million homes in the U.S. CMT, CMT.com and CMT Radio offer an unparalleled mix of music, news, live concerts and series and are the top resource for country music on demand. The network's digital platforms include the 24-hour music channel, CMT Pure Country, CMT App, CMT Mobile and CMT VOD.