



PHOTO BY ASHLEY HAYES-STONE

The holiday season, the Red Xmas crew gets communal.

Coal hard cash

The Red Museum presents a brand new sequel to last year's holiday show

BY PATRICK HYUN WILSON

How does Santa Claus judge whether a child has been naughty or nice? With more than 2.2 billion children in the world and more each minute, not to mention the rising costs of coal, the task can't be easy for jolly Saint Nick. Maybe in the internet age some of that weight can be taken off his shoulders—at least that's what Anthony Siino and Devin McMIndes imagine in their play, *Claus for Concern: An Original Christmas Play*.

Siino and McMIndes wrote the play to premiere for one night only, Saturday, Dec. 21 at A Very Red Xmas II, the sequel to last year's holiday variety show hosted at the Red Museum.

The event is an experimental holiday performance art extravaganza organized by the venue's operators, Jennifer Jackson and Brett Loper, who are bringing in talent from across Sacramento.

"It's kind of a fun way to get a lot of different kinds of people involved, maybe even doing things that they don't usually do, creatively," Jackson said. "I think because it's a DIY space people expect something different, and so letting people get outside of their own box is OK."

Featuring a frustrated Santa struggling with the price of coal, the devious Grinch, a dutiful/murderous elf, a snotty boy, a pouty girl, a child named "Lil Jerkoff," a character playing former vice president Al Gore, *Claus For Concern* isn't your typical holiday play.

The Red Museum is the perfect stage; it's not-so-serious regard for holiday traditions and production values encapsulate the tone of A Very Red Xmas II.

This year, the show is hosted by local comedian Melissa McGillicuddy and features performances by J. Irvin Dally (who will be releasing a new EP the same night), family soul band LaTour and hip-hop trio Weirdoze. There will also be puppetry by Tyler Baldwin, sets by Chopstick and Holiday Special, appearances by Krampus and Santa Burg, one horse open sleigh rides by Kylie Jackson (aka piggyback rides) and the premiere of *Claus For Concern*.

"There's a lot of stimulants, for sure," Loper said. "It's all kind of riffing on Christmas in some way."

McMIndes and Siino are not veteran playwrights. Siino's history with theater is limited to one high school performance as John Proctor in *The Crucible*. Despite limited experience, the passion for creation drives Siino to do his best.

"I think the truth is, a lot of Red Museum stuff, and particularly my art, is all based around sort of forgetting what it means to have to work through all of these tiers of gatekeeping. Really, it's about just saying, 'Hey, we have ideas. Let's just do things. Let's just do it,'" Siino said.

A Very Red Xmas II carries on that ethos of creation, building a communal experience around the holiday season, which can be difficult for some people.

"There are a lot of really traditional things about the holidays that don't resonate with a lot of people. So this is capturing the things that a lot of people ... like about the holidays, which is really just coming together," Jackson said. "We're poking fun at the tradition, but it's still there a little bit, because there is something cozy about it." □

Catch A Very Red Xmas II 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21. Tickets are \$12. The Red Museum, 212 15th St. For more info, visit the Facebook event page.

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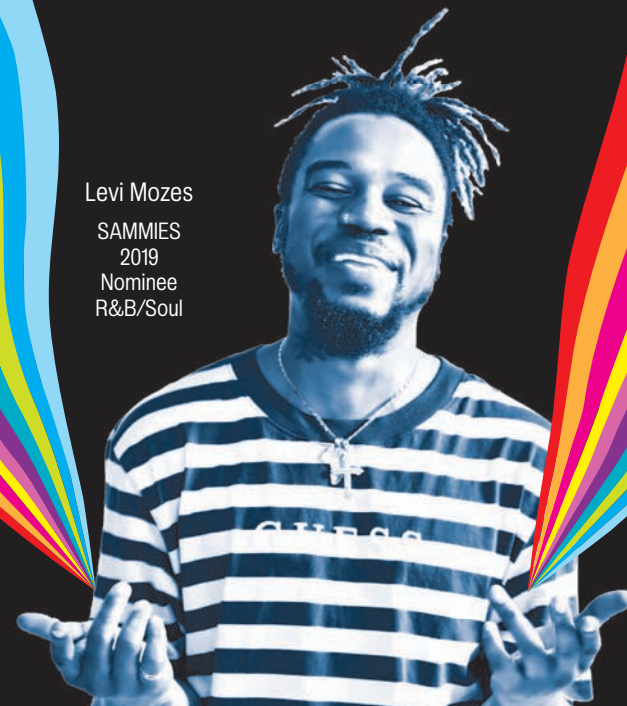
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