

New Stage Theatre, Mississippi's professional theatre located in Jackson, is seeking actors for its October 2026 production of the world premiere of *Slippin' Through the Crack: The Bobby Rush Musical* written by Stephen Helper and Bobby Rush with music by Bobby Rush.

From the juke joints of the South to the Grammy stage, Bobby Rush's life is a story of perseverance, artistry, and soul. This electrifying theatrical concert blends live music with storytelling to trace a remarkable journey through American history and the blues

Rehearsals begin on September 22 or September 29, 2026.
The show opens on October 20 and plays until November 1, 2026.

Casting is currently ongoing for all characters in the musical. Travel, housing and per diem included for out of state artists. There will be local auditions in June. If you would like to submit for the production and attend the audition in the Jackson area, please send picture and resume to submissions@newstagetheatre.com and put the name of the character you wish to be considered for and where you live in the subject line. If you are not in the Jackson area, please video 30-45 seconds of a song in the style of the show and send as a link. The deadline for submissions in June 18, 2026.

New Stage Theatre is committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.
Actors of all backgrounds are strongly encouraged to submit their information.

CHARACTER BREAKDOWNS

BOBBY RUSH (20's - 50's). This is the starring role. Bobby Rush is a multifaceted blues singer, entertainer with great audience rapport, sexy, and needs to carry a heavy acting load. This performance needs to have soulful authenticity over musical theatre polish. Needs to move well but this is not a dancing role. Ideally he would play acoustic guitar.

OLD BOBBY RUSH / EMMETT ELLIS JR. (60-80's). This is a dual role. Old Bobby Rush is the old version of Bobby Rush - still a fantastic entertainer. Most of his songs are direct to the audience. Emmett Ellis Jr. is a charismatic Southern preacher and the father of Bobby Rush. He is leader with a bit of a mischievous side. Plays simple guitar chords for one song.

JUNIOR (7-14) Bobby Rush as a youth. A spirited, enthusiastic, cheeky boy who always hears music.

Roles for Female presenting performers. All of the roles include various ensemble tracks.
WOMAN 1 through WOMAN 4 play historically Black people.

MINNIE (25-50's) Mezzo-Soprano. A strong and playful woman. Also plays KOKO TAYLOR and WOMAN 1.

HAZEL (20's-35) Mezzo-Soprano/Soprano. She is Bobby Rush's first wife. Fiery, fun and very sexy. Her role is ultimately tragic as she suffers the deaths of all her children. Also play WOMAN 2.

BERTHA JEAN(30's-40's) Alto. She is Bobby Rush's second wife. A determined, political and bold woman. Also plays WOMAN 3.

MATTIE (late 30's - 60) Any vocal range. Bobby Rush's mom. Also plays GREAT AUNT SPIVEY, a long lost relative and WOMAN 4.

Roles for Male presenting performers. All of the roles include various ensemble tracks and involve a variety of vocal ranges.
MAN 1 Through MAN 4 play historically Black people.

HOWLIN' WOLF (late 20's - 40's) A great Bluesman. Rough, scary, growly voice. AlsoS play BIG JOHN, a loud, funny guy and MAN 1.

MUDDY WATERS (late 20's- 40's) Famous Bluesman. Also plays Charlie is a hard-working man from Bobby's youth and MAN 2.

B. B. KING (late 20's- 40's) Great Bluesman. Also plays CALVIN CARTER, a wily successful record producer fallen on hard times and MAN 3.

MEL LONDON (30's) A slick man in the record producing industry. Also plays DONELL RUSH, 33-year-old son of Bobby Rush who starts his own career in the dance charts and MAN 4.

E. L. BURGESS (40's- 50's) bigoted plantation owner from Bobby Rush's youth. Also plays CAESAR CAPONE, a Chicago club owner and MAN 5.

LEONARD CHEZ (late 20's – 40's) The famous founder of Chess Records, the premier Blues label. Also plays MAN 6.

*New Stage Theatre
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