

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

Molly Smith Artistic Director Edgar Dobie Executive Producer Zelda Fichandler Founding Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BEBE WINANS AND CHARLES RANDOLPH-WRIGHT
PREMIERE NEW AMERICAN MUSICAL
BORN FOR THIS: THE BEBE WINANS STORY
AT ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER
IN SUMMER 2016

(Washington, D.C.) Six-time Grammy Award winner **BeBe Winans** and Broadway's *Motown the Musical* director **Charles Randolph-Wright** will debut the world-premiere American musical *Born for This: The BeBe Winans Story* at Arena Stage in summer 2016 as part of a co-production with Alliance Theatre in Atlanta. Featuring new music by BeBe, the musical chronicles the early days of his career with sister CeCe Winans and their rise to fame through Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker's *Praise the Lord* network television show.

The production will star the next generation of Winan singers—BeBe and CeCe will be portrayed by the brother and sister duo's real-life niece and nephew, siblings **Deborah Joy Winans** and **Juan Winans**, as previously announced by Alliance Theatre. *Born for This* runs **July 1-August 28, 2016 in the Kreeger Theater** at Arena Stage, following a run at Alliance Theatre, and is produced in association with Daniel Chlewich and Todd Gershwin with assistance from Murray Horwitz.

"Arena Stage is proud to be partnering with Alliance Theatre, Charles Randolph-Wright and BeBe Winans on this ambitious new musical," comments Arena Stage Artistic Director **Molly Smith**. "This is a real confluence of artists and talent. The journey of BeBe and CeCe Winans is an important story to tell, and I know that Charles will give audiences a heartfelt and insightful experience."

"BeBe Winans has an amazing story to tell, and collaborating with him has been thrilling as his story hits very close to home," says **Randolph-Wright**. "I grew up near Pineville, North Carolina, where BeBe's extraordinary journey began with *PTL*. I was working at an amusement park 10 minutes away from where he was working. We did not know each other then, but he lived this story and I lived down the street. I simply cannot wait to bring *Born for This*—an extraordinary musical collision of worlds—to Arena Stage, my D.C. home."

"When you're a teenager you don't think your life is being recorded for others to learn from it, or to be healed by it, or better yet to find strength through your fears and failures," shares **BeBe Winans**. "But now I know these were God's plans for my life. We are all born with and for a purpose and unfortunately where the journey takes us we don't know. What we can know is that when we have arrived at that place you can be assured that God was right there with every step, and it was all destined to be. This new play celebrates that journey."

—continued—

Born for This: The BeBe Winans Story

Book by BeBe Winans and Charles Randolph-Wright

Music and lyrics by BeBe Winans

Directed by Charles Randolph-Wright

In the Kreeger Theater / July 1-August 28, 2016

ABOUT: Detroit natives BeBe and CeCe Winans, youngest siblings of the Winans family dynasty, experience the ultimate in culture shocks when invited to join Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker's *Praise the Lord* network television show. The Winans teenagers have the opportunity to become more than just television celebrities, but to integrate TV evangelism. As BeBe and CeCe encounter fame, fortune and even a young Whitney Houston, BeBe must learn to balance his desire for success with his true calling.

Tickets are currently available for advance sale to groups of 10 or more. Some restrictions may apply. For more information please call 202-488-4380.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Producer Edgar Dobie, is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. Arena Stage produces plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep and dangerous in the American spirit, and presents diverse and ground-breaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Arena Stage is committed to commissioning and developing new plays through the American Voices New Play Institute. Arena Stage impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its seventh decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org

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