

THE NAACP THEATRE AWARDS ARE PRESENTED BY
THE BEVERLY HILLS/HOLLYWOOD NAACP BRANCH

www.NAACPTheatreAwards.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Awards Press Contact: Lisa Humphrey-Premier Concepts

Email: media@premierconceptspr.com

Phone: 310.293.4154



**NAACP ANNOUNCES COMPLETE LIST OF NOMINEES FOR THE
28th ANNUAL THEATRE AWARDS**

The NAACP Beverly Hills Hollywood Branch Salutes Excellence in Black Theatre

Beverly Hills, California (April 5, 2019) – The NAACP Beverly Hills/Hollywood Branch’s Theatre Viewing Committee has spoken, and the nominations are in for the **28th Annual NAACP Theatre Awards**. In order to accurately represent the list of contenders for this year’s awards, we have updated the nominations list, which truly represents a legacy of talent that includes a legendary gospel family, a member of the EGOT winner’s circle, and cross-section of elite screen and stage actors and actresses. They all will be honored for their excellence on both the small and large stages during our annual awards dinner, slated to be held on **Monday, June 17, 2019, 6:00 p.m.** at the prestigious **Millennium Biltmore Hotel** in Los Angeles, California.

A musical production depicting the rise of gospel duo siblings BeBe and CeCe Winan’s, **“Born For This,”** leads the pack of nominees among the Equity (large) theatre group with 13 nods. The Winans’ musical legacy runs 4 generations deep as proven by co-stars of this production Deborah Joy Winans, star of OWN’s Greenleaf, and Juan Winans are both nominated for their portrayal of the Winans siblings. Rounding out the 13 nominations, both BeBe Winans and Charles Randolph Wright received nods for Best Playwright. Just as the Winans helped define a modern era of gospel music, “Disco Queen” Donna Summer helped define a distinctive era in American history. Honoring the life and music of disco icon Donna Summer, the Equity Theatre musical, **“Summer: The Donna Summer Musical”** earns a whopping 10 nods.

Dramas also made a significant impression this awards season with **“Head of Passes”** raking in 6 nominations. The critically acclaimed production is a gripping drama about acceptance and the power of faith. The incomparable Phylicia Rashād earned a Best Lead Female nomination for her portrayal of the ailing matriarch. Once dubbed “The Mother” of the black community at the NAACP Image Awards, this veteran stage and television actress is in the history books as the first African American to receive a Tony Award for Best Actress in 2004.

Previous NAACP Theatre Award winner for “Ray Charles Live!,” Rahn Coleman gets another nod this year for Best Music Director for **“Shout Sister Shout,”** a large theatre production that tells the story of the Rock & Roll trailblazing guitarist Sister Rosetta Tharpe. This production earned 3 nods for its portrayal of the “Godmother of Rock & Roll.”

Veteran actor Joe Morton picks up a nomination for Best One Person Show for **“Turn Me Loose.”** Renowned for his portrayal of the ruthless “Papa Pope,” on the television series **“Scandal,”** viewers can now catch the actor in the critically acclaimed new television drama **“God Friended Me”** in which he has taken on a distinctly different role as a church pastor. **“Turn Me Loose”** is a one-man comedic drama about the extraordinary life of Dick Gregory. Producer John Legend and Get Lifted Film Co. earned a Best Producer nomination for this bio-play. Mr. Legend continues to expand his wings after becoming the most recent artist to join the EGOT family, earning an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony for his vast music career. Could a Theatre Award be his next conquest?

“King Hedley II leads the group of 99-seat theatre productions with 6 nominations including Best Producer and Best Playwright. Penned by Pulitzer Prize winning playwright August Wilson, this is thought to be one Wilson’s most tragic plays as it explores what happens to black men when they feel worthless and black women when they feel forgotten.

Small theatre productions **“This Land”** and **“Les Blancs”** tie with 5 nominations each in the small theatre category. Both productions took the audience across the globe to tell their stories. **“This Land”** followed 4 families spanning 150 years of history from their country of origin to Watts in Southern California. Evangeline Ordaz, the nominated playwright for this production, explored the complexity and diversity each family brings to the streets of Watts. However, the critically acclaimed play **“Les Blancs”** by **“A Raisin in the Sun”** playwright Lorraine Hansberry depicts the plights of colonialism in the late 19th and early 20th century on the continent of Africa as she explores the culture clashes and assimilation that occurred during that period.

Lastly, up for Best Director in a 99-Seat Theatre, veteran stage and screen actor Bill Cobbs and actress Gina Belafonte bring decades of wisdom and knowledge to the director’s chair. Both projects explore the social and political complexities in our communities from two distinctly different angles. Bill Cobbs directed the powerful drama, **“The Meeting,”** which imagines a conversation between two of the most socially and politically influential figures in modern times -- Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This powerful play also earned nods for Best Producer and Best Ensemble Cast. Best Director nominee Gina Belafonte, youngest daughter of Harry Belafonte, brings a different point of view on politics and society in the one-man show, **“Lyrics from the Lockdown.”** This acclaimed production explores the ways race, class, power and privilege shape prison and policing in America through the eyes of Byronn Bain who is also nominated for Best One Person Show – 99 Seat Theater.

Executive/Creative Producer of the NAACP Theatre Awards Show **Tia Boyd** states, *“The black audience is a growing theatre market that must not be ignored. The NAACP Salute to Black Theatre awards and highlights plays that bring a new energy to the art.”*

The NAACP Theatre Viewing Committee considers all candidates who submit their productions from January 2017 through December 15, 2017, for possible nomination. All productions must run for at least six (6) full performances in Southern California (San Diego to Bakersfield included). Previews, invited dress rehearsals, and other similar showings do not count towards eligibility. Eligibility for this year’s edition was limited to theatre productions opening in January 2017 through December 2017. Productions who meet all eligibility requirements before the deadline are considered eligible for a 2018 NAACP Theatre Award. Nominees will be notified by the NAACP Theatre Viewing Committee Chairpersons Martha Pruden-Hamiter and Lynn Patterson.

Tickets can be purchased via Brown Paper Tickets <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4212010>. For more information on the NAACP Theatre Awards, please visit www.naacptheatreawards.com or email: media@premierconceptspr.com.

About the NAACP Theatre Awards

The NAACP Theatre Awards is presented by the Beverly Hills/Hollywood NAACP Branch in partnership with the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles City Council President/District 10 Councilman, Herb Wesson Jr. The event is co-chaired by Councilman Herb Wesson, Beverly Hills/Hollywood NAACP Branch President Ron Hasson, and the Executive/Creative Producer, Tia Boyd. The mission of the Theatre Awards is to entertain, educate, inspire the community and create diversity in the arts and entertainment industry. The prestigious star-studded gala aims to honor the highest achieving persons in the field of dramatic arts. The branch also celebrates a four-day theatre festival, which provides a platform for thespians to express their craft and share their contributions with an audience of their peers, the community and other individuals who celebrate live theatre in Los Angeles.

[See Full List of Nominations Below]

28th Annual NAACP Theatre Awards Nominations
February 28, 2018

Best Choreography – Larger Theatre

The Legend of Georgia McBride – Paul McGill
Summer: The Donna Summer Musical – Sergio Trujillo
Born For This – Warren Adams

Best Choreography – 99 Seat Theatre

Les Blancs – Joyce Guy
Punk Rock – Matthew Glave
Runaway Home – Janet Roston

Best Costumes – Larger Theatre

Summer: The Donna Summer Musical – Paul Tazewell
The Legend of Georgia McBride – E.B. Brooks
Born For This – William Ivey Long

Best Costumes – 99 Seat Theatre

Transition – Kate Bergh
Les Blancs – Wendell C. Carmichael
Antony and Cleopatra – Gloria Gifford,
Lauren Plaxco and Lucy Walsh

Best Director – Larger Theatre

Head of Passes – Tina Landau
Zoot Suit – Luis Valdez
The Legend of Georgia McBride – Mike Donahue

Best Director – 99 Seat Theatre

The Meeting – Bill Cobbs
Lyrics from Lockdown – Gina Belafonte
Runaway Home – Shirley Jo Finney

Best Director of a Musical – Larger Theatre

Born For This – Charles Randolph-Wright
Shout Sister Shout – Randy Johnson
Summer: The Donna Summer Musical - Des McAnuff

Best Director of a Musical – 99 Seat Theatre

Antony and Cleopatra – Gloria Gifford
Can God's Love – Spencer M. Collins IV
Walking in Dorothy Dandridge's Shoes.
Her Final New Beginning – Wanda Ray Willis

Best Ensemble Cast – Larger Theatre

Summer: The Donna Summer Musical Home
946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips

Best Ensemble Cast – 99 Seat Theatre

The Meeting
Periphery
Les Blancs

Best Lead Female - Larger Theatre

Head of Passes – Phylicia Rashad
Born For This – Deborah Joy Winans
Trouble in Mind – Earnestine Phillips

Best Lead Female – 99 Seat Theatre

An Accident – Kacie Rogers
This Land – LeShay Tomlinson Boyce
Br'er Cotton – Yvonne Huff Lee
This Land – Niketa Calame

Best Lead Male – Larger Theatre

Born For This – Juan Winans
Between Riverside and Crazy – John Cothran
Driving Miss Daisy – Arthur Richardson

Best Lead Male – 99 Seat Theatre

Br'er Cotton – Omete Anassi
An Accident – Kent Faulcon
Transitions - Joshua Wolf Coleman

Best Lighting – Larger Theatre

Summer: The Donna Summer Musical – Howell Binkley
Head of Passes – Jeff Croiter
Born For This – Jason Lyons

Best Lighting - 99 Seat Theatre

Transition – Donny Jackson
Les Blancs – Derrick McDaniel
King Hedley II – Derek Jones

Best Music Director – Larger Theatre

Born For This - Jaret Landon
Shout Sister Shout – Rahn Coleman
Summer: The Donna Summer Musical – Ron Melrose

Best Music Director – 99 Seat Theatre

Love is a Dirty Word – Giovanni Adams
Elevator – Mario Marchetti
Can God's Love – Cedric Lily

Best One Person Show – Larger Theatre

Turn Me Loose – Joe Morton

Best One Person Show - 99 Seat Theatre

Lyrics from Lockdown – Byronn Bain
Love is a Dirty Word – Giovanni Adams
Conversation 'Bout the Girls – Sonia Jackson

Best Playwright – Larger Theatre

Born for This – Bebe Winans and Charles Randolph-Wright
Summer: The Donna Summer Musical – Colman Domingo, Robert Cary and Des McAnuff
Head of Passes – Tarrell Alvin Mc Craney

Best Playwright – 99 Seat Theatre

King Hedley II – August Wilson
This Land – Evangeline Ordaz
An Accident – Lydia Stryk

Best Producer – Larger Theatre

Turn Me Loose – John Legend (Get Lifted Film Company) & Mike Jackson
Born For This – My Destiny Productions and Ron Gillyard
Summer: The Donna Summer Musical – LaJolla Playhouse

Best Producer – 99 Seat Theatre

This Land – Company of Angels, Danny Munoz & Tamadhur Al-Aqeel
The Meeting – Shannon Sylvain
King Hedley II – Sophina Brown

Best Set Design – Larger Theatre

Head of Passes – G. W. Mercier
Summer: The Donna Summer Musical –
Robert Brill
Big Night – John Lee Beatty

Best Set Design - 99 Seat Theatre

This Land – Justine Huen
Bee-luther Hatchee – Christopher Scott
Murillo
King Hedley II – John Iacovelli

Best Sound – Larger Theatre

Summer: The Donna Summer Musical –
Gareth Owen
Head of Passes – Rob Milburn and
Michael Bodeen
Shout Sister Shout – Jon Gottlieb

Best Sound – 99 Seat Theatre

Transition – David Marling
Les Blancs – Jeff Gardner
King Hedley II – Kevin Novinsky

**Best Supporting Female – Larger
Theatre**

Born For This – Nita Whitaker
Born For This – Kirsten Wyatt Born
Born For This – Kiandra Richardson

**Best Supporting Female – 99 Seat
Theatre**

Peace Be Still – Brely Evans
Peace Be Still - Anika McFall
Punk Rock – Raven Scott
Runaway Home – Karen Malina White

**Best Supporting Male – Larger
Theatre**

Born For This – Milton Craig Nealy
Five Guys Named Moe - Rogelio
Douglas, Jr
The Legend of Georgia McBride – Larry
Powell

**Best Supporting Male – 99 Seat
Theatre**

King Hedley II – Adolphus Ward Punk
Rock – Jacob B. Gibson
Br'er Cotton – Christopher Carrington